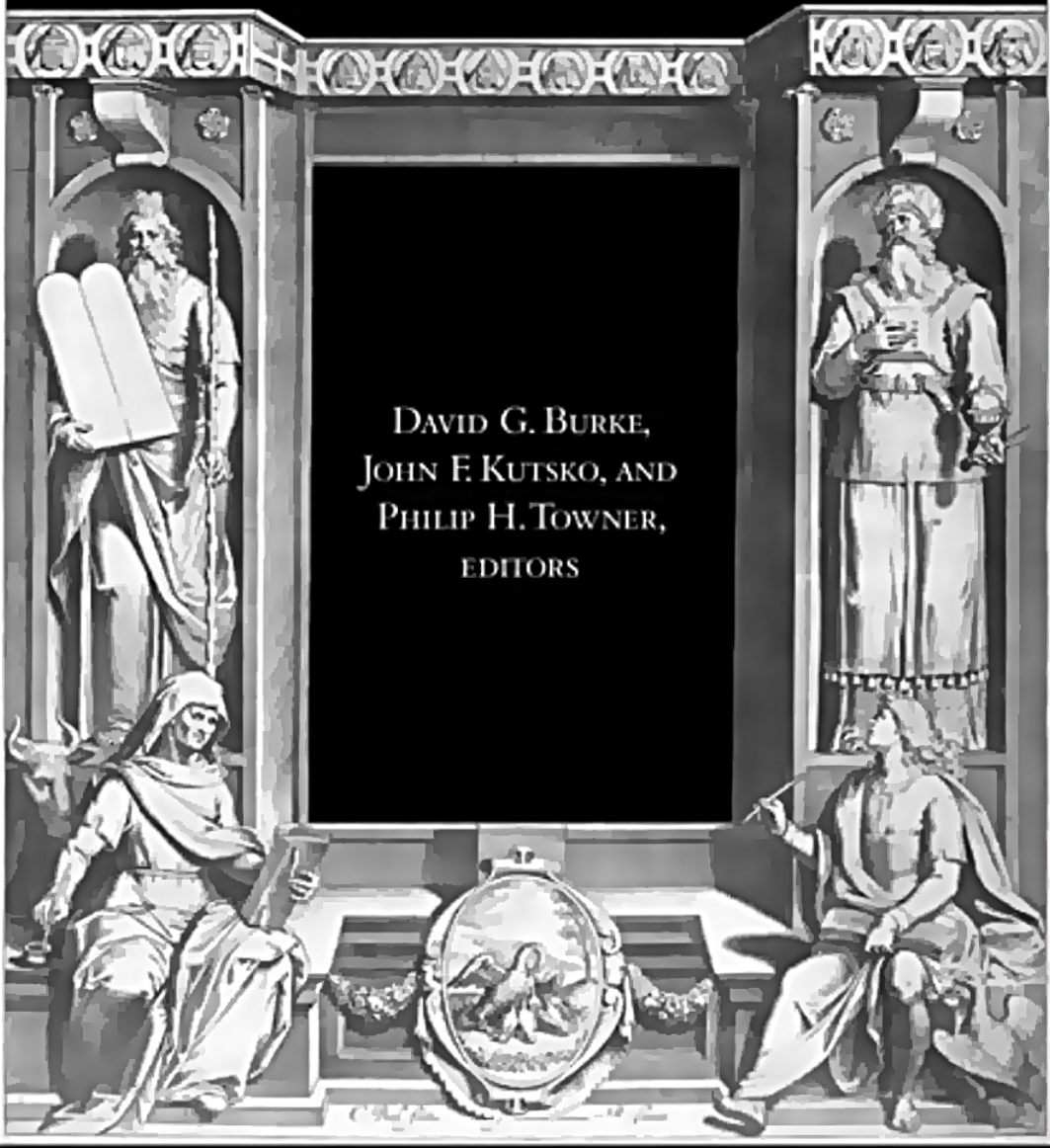
THE KING JAMES VERSION AT 400

Assessing Its Genius as Bible Translation and Its Literary Influence



David G. Burke,
John F. Kutsko, and
Philip H. Towner,
editors

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Society of Biblical Literature
Atlanta

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Foreword: Vital Aspects of the KJV Genius

David G. Burke

The American writer and critic Dwight Macdonald once wrote:

> The King James Bible came at the end of the Elizabethan age, between Shakespeare and Milton, when Englishmen were using words more passionately, richly, vigorously, wittily, and sublimely than ever before or since. Although none of the divines or scholars who made it were literary men, their language was touched with genius—the genius of a period when style was the common property of educated men rather than an individual achievement.[1]

As this borrowed Latin term, *genius*, has evolved in English usage, it has come to mean "an exceptional natural capacity of intellect, especially as shown in creative and original work in science, art, music, etc."[2] To celebrate both the genius of this exemplary Bible translation and the extraordinary achievement of its 400-year longevity, the Society of Biblical Literature and the Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship collaborated to organize a series of three scholarly symposia. These were held during the quatercentenary year (2011)—at the SBL Annual Meeting in Atlanta (Nov. 2010), the SBL International Meeting in London (July 2011), and at the SBL-AAR Joint Annual Meetings in San Francisco (Nov. 2011).

In the course of these three symposia a total of forty scholarly papers were presented on a wide range of informative KJV-related topics, under the general theme: *The KJV at 400: Assessing Its Genius as Bible Translation and Its Literary Influence.* The editors of this book have assembled a great many of these papers and organized them into three sections of inquiry and assessment: the KJV in its historical context; the KJV in the history of Bible translation; and the reception of the KJV and its literary influence.

Leading into these sections, the opening chapter represents the two-part keynote paper addressing the general symposia theme, as presented in the opening and closing symposia by David Norton, perhaps the world's leading authority on the text of the KJV. This chapter draws on his most recent research and will serve the reader as a most helpful introduction and grounding for becoming current in the field of KJV studies. The subsequent chapters in the following three sections of the book explore in depth the many distinctive facets of the collective genius of the KJV translators and of their Bible translation. Written by experts covering a wide array of relevant areas of expertise—including Hebrew Bible, Greek New Testament, Bible translation, biblical theology, linguistics, English-language studies, English literature, literary criticism, medieval and Renaissance history, African American church history, liturgy, church history, early cartography, Jewish studies, civil religion, postcolonial studies—these chapters will provide readers with a consummative introduction to the considerable factors that have contributed to the making of the KJV and to its widely attributed genius. The bibliography at the end of this volume lists a range of important works on the KJV that the authors and editors feel are especially authoritative and interesting to anyone eager to learn more about this translation.

Just as a great river is formed by the many tributaries that join to produce its ultimate magnitude and force, so also many streams have contributed to the making of the KJV, to its collective genius, and to its eventual emergence (and long reign) in the English-speaking world as *the* English Bible.

1. A Nurturing Environment: The Importance of the British Universities and Their Colleges

One very important contributing "stream" is that of the roles played by the universities (and university learning) in the Renaissance and Reformation eras, in England and throughout Europe. In England the cause of learning was most powerfully addressed by the universities of Oxford and Cambridge and their colleges. It was also during this period, especially, that libraries were being established and expanded by these university colleges, and innovative research was being carried out by scholars in many fields. Given the dominance of the church in this age, much of that research was in the areas of the biblical and cognate languages, as well as theology, the arts, humanities, and the sciences.

The Middle Ages bequeathed more than two dozen universities to Europe, and new universities continued to emerge in various cities during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In England, by contrast, the emergence of such centers of higher learning took the form not of new universities arising in various cities but of Oxford and Cambridge continuing to create new colleges, each contributing to the burgeoning of learning in England, especially in the fields of the classical and ancient biblical languages.

Latin was of course the language common to all fields of scholarly inquiry in the Middle Ages and remained dominant in the early 1600s. It was the language in which discussions and disputations were conducted, books written, lectures given, and official documents decreed. Its use assured that intellectual debate had an international scope, albeit one limited to Europe's elite. It was within this pervasive Latinate scholarly milieu that the fourteenth-century Oxford scholar John Wycliffe (ca. 1330–1384) and his Lollard confreres translated the Bible, working from the Vulgate since they had no mastery of Hebrew and Greek. Wycliffe was a reformer ahead of his time, and his Bible translation from the Latin Vulgate was carried out in the face of intense royal and ecclesiastical opposition. It is surely a supreme irony that the Latin of the Vulgate, whose very title means "common," had come to be viewed in the Middle Ages as the most perfect language in which to convey the *verbum dei*; and thus any effort such as Wycliffe's to translate the "divine language" into a "common" vernacular of his own era was considered dangerous heresy by the church authorities.[3]

However, by the time William Tyndale (1494–1536) began translating the Bible, just a little more than a century after Wycliffe, a virtual sea change had occurred because of the intense learning that had developed thanks largely to the blossoming of the English Renaissance within the British universities. Unlike his predecessors at Oxford, Tyndale now had full mastery of Greek, and, to a lesser extent, of Hebrew. Like Wycliffe, he was convinced that ordinary people needed to have the Scriptures in their common language, but unlike Wycliffe he was able to access a much greater array of scholarly resources for the biblical languages due to the growth of university college libraries that were expanding exponentially since the advent of printing. With the help of learned colleagues, such as Miles Coverdale and John Rogers, Tyndale was able to produce the first "primary" translation in English—the New Testament in 1526 (revised in 1534), and the Pentateuch in 1530. Tyndale was never able to finish the Old Testament, but all that Tyndale had done survived in the 1536 Bible completed by his colleague, Miles Coverdale, known thereafter as the

Coverdale Bible.[4] Another of Tyndale's Antwerp colleagues, John Rogers, also published an English Bible in 1537, completing the work of Tyndale, but under the pseudonymous title *Matthew's Bible*, due to the dangers of the time. Rogers slipped in an admiring tribute to his mentor by inserting a "W. T." at the end of Malachi.

2. Scholarship and Preparedness: Finding the Best Translators for the Job

By the time King James I and Archbishop Richard Bancroft (ca. 1544–1610) were organizing in 1604 the Bible translation project that would become the KJV, the advances of biblical scholarship since Tyndale's time had been so profound that the two men were able to design and staff a translation committee that would comprise six companies of about nine translators each, with scholars drawn from the two great British universities (Oxford and Cambridge) working from three locations (the two universities and Westminster Abbey in London).[5] All were thoroughly at home with Biblical Hebrew and Greek and the wide range of the Greek and Latin classics; most also knew other ancient and modern languages, and many had learned from youth to read, write, think, and discuss in Latin.

The renowned Cambridge linguist Lancelot Andrewes (1555–1626) is a prime example of the impressive depth of the KJV translators' scholarship and preparedness at this point in history. Proficient in all biblical and cognate languages and several dozen modern languages, a spellbinder in the pulpit who often preached from the Greek New Testament, Andrewes exemplifies the "collective genius" of the KJV in terms of the scholarship these translators brought to the project. Dean of Westminster since 1601, Andrewes was appointed director of the First Westminster Company of translators (assigned Genesis–2 Kings) at the project's inception.[6] The Second Westminster Company (New Testament Epistles) included Ralph Hutchinson (ca. 1552–1606), president of St. John's College, Oxford, who as a boy had been a classmate of Lancelot Andrewes, studying Hebrew and Greek at the Merchant Taylor's School in London.[7]

Edward Lively (ca. 1545–1605) was made director of the First Cambridge Company (1 Chronicles–Ecclesiastes); that he was the Regius Professor of Hebrew at Trinity College, Cambridge, testifies to the high importance accorded to the learning of Biblical Hebrew in this age. The Second Cambridge Company (Apocrypha) included Andrew Downes (ca. 1549–1628), Regius Professor of Greek at St. John's College, Cambridge;

and John Bois (1561–1644), lecturer in Greek in the same college, whose detailed Latin notes made during the general review stage represent one of the few surviving artifacts of the KJV project.

The First Oxford Company (Isaiah–Malachi) was directed by John Harding (d. 1610), Regius Professor of Hebrew and president of Magdalen College, Oxford, and also included John Rainolds (1549–1607), president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, said by peers to be a "living library." The Second Oxford Company (Gospels, Acts, Revelation) included the gifted polymath Sir Henry Saville (1549–1622), warden of Merton College, Oxford, and at an earlier time tutor in Greek to Elizabeth I.

The scholars appointed to the KJV project were clearly drawn from the "brightest and best" of their time. This aspect of their deep scholarly preparation is a most significant contribution to the "collective genius" of the KJV, and readers will find this more fully exemplified in Norton's keynote chapter and evidenced in many of the book's other chapters as well.

3. A Thoughtful Strategy: Developing a Detailed Plan of Work and Intensely Collaborative Process

The plan and process designed by James I and Bancroft was brilliant, ensuring that individual scholarly virtuosity was brought into a balanced and harmonious team structure. A careful and collaborative set of draft-text review stages provided a system of checks and balances amid the differing theological and translation preferences of the individual translators, ensuring that idiosyncratic or tendentious phrasings would not survive to the final draft. Since this project brought together loyal Church of England scholars and committed Puritan dissenters, it was important to James that the translators from each side grasped the higher aim of a "common" English Bible. The carefully prepared "rules," as well as the structure, were designed to ensure the best outcome.[8]

Rule 1 mandates that the translators were to use the Bishops' Bible (the translators worked from the 1602 printing of this 1568 translation) as their base text and, after consulting the original language texts and all other available Bible translations, make improvements with "as little altered as the truth of the originall will permitt." Rule 8 prescribes the process: "Every particular Man of each company, to take ye same Chapter or Chapters, and having translated or amended them severally by himselfe, where he thinketh good, all to meete together, confer what they have done, and agree for their Parts what shall stand." Rule 9 elaborates the next steps: "As any one

Company hath dispatched any one Booke in this Manner they shall send it to the rest to be considered of seriously and judiciously: for His Majesty is verie careful of this point." The last stage of review for the translators was the "general meeting" (or general review), in which two translators from each company convened to go over the drafts for the entire Bible.[9] It has been well noted that when the general review was done "the words of the King James Bible would have gone through at least four winnowing processes. Nothing was left to chance."[10]

4. A Lasting Legacy: A Solid Model for Doing Bible Translation

The KJV translation project was carried out with great foresight and disciplined linguistic skill, yet its English text is hardly without problems. And no literary text can hope to be timeless and ever new. So many of the KJV's words have changed enough in meaning over the 400 years as to be misleading to modern readers.[11]

And, while so often graceful and cadenced, its Elizabethan English can also in places strike today's readers/hearers as obscure and archaic.[12] Add to this the limitations of the manuscript base the translators worked from: the translators had access only to relatively few manuscripts, most of which were quite late. That was not at all their fault, but since their time astounding manuscript discoveries have vastly improved the manuscript base for both the Greek and Hebrew Testaments. That this was a shortcoming of the KJV was increasingly recognized by scholars until finally official English and American revisions were made in the late 1800s to bring the English Bible text in line with the many new discoveries of ancient biblical manuscripts.[13]

The archaistic language and the inadequate manuscript base remain the enduring challenges to continued use of the KJV, but these problems notwithstanding, the practices modeled by the translators set the standard for what many still consider to be a sound approach to Bible translation work to this day. And the translators' conceptualization and design of the project also represent one aspect of the KJV's collective genius. The five model practices are:

(1) *Collaborative translation by teams with a variety of skills and perspectives*. In recent centuries all substantive Bible translations have been developed by teams that are structured to include specialists in Hebrew, Greek, linguistics, theology, English language and poetry, and other relevant disciplines. Predecessor translations had involved more than a single

translator,[14] but the king's design of a large committee made up of six companies significantly raised the bar.[15]

(2) *Preparation of guidelines (rules) for the project prior to its inception*. This was not an altogether new idea, but given the theological tensions among the collaborating parties, the king and Bancroft had sagely perceived that the project must be well organized, its aims well defined, and its stages carefully mapped and managed. Bancroft's rules were so well articulated that the central aim of the project (rule 1, above) was never in question for either party, and the procedural stages assured a thorough vetting and traditional language use. This brilliant "process mapping" also points to genius, and is a practice emulated to this day in Bible translation work.

(3) *Use of a multilevel draft review process*. This idea of an intensely collaborative multistage vetting process designed by James I and Bancroft is now standard practice for Bible translation projects. Phrasings and lexical choices are tested from the standpoint of as many expert perspectives as possible, and are always open to revision.[16] Given the theological tensions within the companies, this careful review process, articulated in rules 8 through13, assured that the end result would be free of contentious or polemical language.

(4) *Providing a preface to the translation*. The KJV's use of a preface to give context was not a new feature in English Bible translations. Wycliffe's Bible editions had a preface, as did Tyndale's 1534 New Testament. But in writing such a comprehensive preface, Miles Smith (Puritan scholar and member of the First Oxford Company), gave the translators' work crucial context, enabling readers to see what the translators were thinking regarding their task of bringing God's Word into English vernacular form. He reveals their self-understanding as translators: the awareness that they were not themselves perfect and were ever standing on the shoulders of their predecessors. More than any others, this KJV preface set the standard of transparency and self-disclosure for later Bible translations, and a preface has been a standard feature in Bibles ever since.[17]

(5) *Use of marginal notes to indicate textual decisions*. The use of marginal notes was not something new for the KJV. Tyndale had already used such abundantly, but they were largely interpretive and sharply polemical.[18] The similar use of marginal notes was continued in the 1560 Geneva Bible; that the Geneva interpretive notes were frequently critical of the established church and royalty made it the Bible of choice for Puritan dissenters. In passages where the literal translation leaves the meaning open

to the reader, Geneva sought to close that gap by providing the "correct" interpretation in the margins. The KJV also used marginal notes, but by the decision of the king these could only be textual notes indicating alternate readings where a word in the Hebrew or Greek was capable of more than one meaning or where an alternate reading in an ancient language text might represent a valid translation choice. James had taken umbrage with the Geneva notes, which often attacked royalty, and he made sure that Bancroft's rule 6 proscribed interpretive and polemical notes completely.[19] In time, as the KJV became the "Authorized Version" in England, this restraint advantaged the KJV as a Bible translation so sure and secure in its translation decisions that interpretive notes were not needed. It had refused to make interpretive decisions for the reader, and it thus had the high ground in times of sharp theological disagreements.

5. A Lasting Legacy: The Enrichment of the English Language and Literature

The eventual impact of the KJV on English language usage and on its literature testifies also to its genius, even though the translators deny having aimed for literary excellence or influence on the subsequent development of English usage. Their chief aim was to produce a new translation of the Bible in an English style that would communicate clearly to ordinary people and be acceptable to all church parties.[20] This they would do by using the best available sources to effect an accurate transfer of meaning from the ancient language texts into what they considered "proper English,"[21] while assuring that the text would read well and be easily understood by those hearing it read.

Great eloquence has frequently been claimed for the KJV English, yet as the chapter here by Robert Alter shows, there are passages where the translators came up short. Over the centuries critics have voiced concern about its hebraized and graecized English,[22] but as Alter has aptly demonstrated in his chapter and elsewhere,[23] the paratactic style that the translators carried from their Hebrew Bible into their English text has been enormously influential in English literature ever since. Literary excellence may not have been their aim, but if their translation in numerous passages has been deemed eloquent, that is surely a fitting by-product of their assiduous work.[24]

The KJV has been deservedly lauded in the many publications that have recently marked its impressive four-hundred-year achievement. Its

staying power has truly been extraordinary, originating as it did in such a different time and culture from today's. As Kent Harold Richards, past executive director of the Society of Biblical Literature, has noted: "It is remarkable that the KJV played such a dominant role over such a long period of time in the English-speaking world. That in itself speaks to its genius."[25]

Notes

1. Cited in Scott McLemee, "Views: Let Us Now Praise KJV," *Inside Higher Ed* (Feb. 16, 2011): 1. Online: http://www.insidehighered.com/layout/set/print/views/mclemee324.

2. *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language* (2nd ed. unabridged; New York: Random House, 1987), 797.

3. See further Mary Dove, *The Earliest Advocates of the English Bible: The Texts of the Medieval Debate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), xix–xx. The 1407 Arundel Constitutions (so named for Thomas Arundel, then archbishop of Canterbury) were officially issued from the Council of Oxford, less than two decades after the Wycliffe Bible was published by his associates in 1390. The council's specific aim was to declare translation of the Bible into English and distribution of such as heretical activity. The fear of what evils an English translation might unleash was still so strong a century later that Thomas More (1478–1535), in his own relentless pursuit and suppression of heresy, declared that Wycliffe had "purposely corrupted that holy texte, malycyously planting therein suche wordys as might in the reders erys serue to the profe of suche heresyes as he went about to sow." Cited from *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies* 3.113, in *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More* (ed. C. M. Lawler, G. Marc'hadour, and R. C. Marius; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 7:314.

4. A "primary" translation of the Bible is one that is done from original language texts. The Wycliffe translation from the Latin Vulgate is by contrast an example of a "secondary" translation. Tyndale's translation work was largely carried out on the Continent because it was still very dangerous to be doing something viewed by church authorities as promoting heresy. Tyndale was hunted down and brought to the stake in Brussels in 1536 as a condemned heretic. Ironically, only a few years later (1539), Henry VIII, having arranged to have himself declared the supreme head of the Church of England, ordered that an English Bible be placed in every English parish, and it was Tyndale's surviving colleague Miles Coverdale who was appointed to create it. Because Archbishop Cranmer preferred the English text of John Rogers's 1537 Bible (itself an editing of Tyndale and Coverdale texts), the base text used by Coverdale was that of Rogers's pseudonymous 1537 Matthew's Bible. This revised Bible became known as the Great Bible because of its large size (for lectern reading), but it was by and large the Tyndale Bible as completed and edited by Miles Coverdale.

5. Westminster Abbey was dissolved as a Benedictine monastery by Henry VIII in 1540. By 1560 the monastic community was replaced by a collegiate church under a

charter granted by Elizabeth I, calling for a Dean and twelve prebendaries or canons. The monastic dormitory became the Dean's Library. The two universities were obvious work centers and two translation companies were assigned to each. With the appointment of Lancelot Andrewes, Westminster's dean since 1601, as director of the First Westminster Company, the abbey made its Jerusalem Chamber available for the work. Given the distances between Oxford, Cambridge, and London, and the slow means of travel, this third location was helpful for translators resident in London or nearer there than the universities.

6. See further the chapter below by Malcolm Guite, "The Word and the Words: Andrewes, Donne, and the Theology of Translation."

7. The Merchant Taylors' School, founded in 1561, provided the early education for eight of the KJV translators. Its master, Richard Mulcaster, was a Greek and Latin specialist who presciently recognized how important the mastery of Hebrew would be for advancing biblical learning and thus ensured that the young boys also acquired Hebrew in their early schooling. See further Julian Reid, "The Oxford Translators," in *Manifold Greatness: The Making of the King James Bible* (ed. Helen Moore and Julian Reid; Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2011), 93.

8. The fourteen rules for translating are usually called "Bancroft's rules," since they were issued by him (though James I may well have had input to them). A beautifully reproduced British Library copy of the rules can be found in Moore and Reid, *Manifold Greatness,* 88–89.

9. When one considers the distances between London, Oxford, and Cambridge, and the mode of travel by horse or coach, these general review sessions must have been logistically difficult to manage.

10. Adam Nicolson, *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003), 81. For the clever James I, who styled himself as "peacemaker" (taking his motto, *beati pacifici*, from the Sermon on the Mount), this carefully designed process did bring a form of unity. This would be the Bible read in the churches, and Puritans could not easily disown it or disparage it because their best scholars had collaborated in its production.

11. KJV editions published by the American Bible Society have long included an appendix listing over five hundred such words; this list appears as appendix B in David G. Burke, ed., *Translation That Openeth the Window: Reflections on the History and Legacy of the King James Bible* (Society of Biblical Literature Biblical Scholarship in North America 23; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2009), 243–58.

12. See especially the chapters in this volume by Robert Alter, David J. A. Clines, and James D. G. Dunn for examples of this.

13. The discovery, for example, of several ancient Greek codices from the fourth-fifth centuries CE had revolutionized the state of the Greek NT, rendering the Greek base for the KJV inadequate. The text of Rev 1:5 illustrates this: the Greek text available to the KJV translators had *lousanti,* "washed," but the centuries older codices have *lysanti,* "freed." Recent Bibles are now able to correct this homophonic copyist error; cf., e.g., NRSV: "freed us from our sins by his blood" rather than "washed us." The relatively recent discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has similarly affected study of the Hebrew Bible text.

14. Wycliffe and Tyndale each had Oxford colleagues who carried some of the load. The Geneva Bible, Great Bible, Bishops' Bible, and Douay-Rheims Bible also employed small teams.

15. The terms *companies* and *directors* bespeak the managerial intent for this project; these terms reflect the entrepreneurial spirit of the late Elizabethan Age when organizations like the East India Company were being formed.

16. As Miles Smith notes in his KJV preface, they were ever willing to revise if that would improve the end result. The enduring literary quality of their work has much to do with this "burnishing" (in Smith's words), since revision is always a key to good writing.

17. The great drawback of the KJV preface, however, is the dense and abstruse style of scholarly writing used, so different from that of the translation itself. Everything readers would want to know about their approach is detailed there, but it was too daunting for all but the learned reader. Publishers eventually dropped it from editions, with the result that many users still are unaware of its existence. See further the chapters here by Richard Burridge and Jacobus Naudé.

18. For example, Tyndale's note at Num 6:22–27 reads: "hereof ye see that Aaron (where he lift up his hand and bless the people) was not as dumb as our bishops be."

19. "Noe marginal notes att all to be affixed, but only for ye explanation of ye Hebrew or Greeke Words, which cannot without some circumlocution soe briefly and fitly be expressed in ye Text."

20. As Miles Smith in the preface puts it: "we desire that the Scripture may speake like itself, as in the language of *Canaan*, that it may bee understood even of the very vulgar."

21. See further on this the Norton chapter below (15, 27 n. 17).

22. Already in his 1689 *Table Talk*, John Selden groused: "If I translate a French book into English, I turn it into English phrase and not into French English. … [In this Bible] the Hebraisms are kept and the phrase of that language is kept." Quoted in David Norton, *The King James Bible: A Short History from Tyndale to Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 185.

23. See especially Robert Alter, *Pen of Iron: American Prose and the King James Bible* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

24. See further the chapters here by Malcolm Guite, Barbara Lewalski, C. Clifton Black, and Seth Lerer.

25. Kent Harold Richards, "King James Version (KJV)," offprint from *The Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception* (ed. Choon-Leong Seow and Hermann Spieckermann; Berlin: de Gruyter, forthcoming), 23.

Preface and Acknowledgments

This volume represents the collective effort of the Society of Biblical Literature and the Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship, which organized a series of three scholarly symposia on the King James Version on the occasion of its four-hundredth anniversary.

It is common to lionize the work of the individual in literature, art, music, or science. However, it is particularly appropriate in the context of this volume of essays and this collaboration of organizations to highlight collective work, of which the KJV is a stunning example. The translation was an orchestra with strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion, conducted and organized into a majestic recording. We cannot help but think of the legend of Ptolemy's Seventy-Two. Like the Bible itself, the KJV is testimony to the occasional mathematical result in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Those parts were indeed numerous, and we want to thank and acknowledge the persons, organizations, and institutions that made this volume possible. First, the symposium series from which these essays were drawn was enthusiastically supported by the King James Bible Trust, which, under the leadership of its chair, the Rt Hon Frank Field MP, was established to celebrate the KJV's impact in history, language, and culture. The Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship at the American Bible Society and the Society of Biblical Literature, particularly through its Executive Director Emeritus, Kent Harold Richards, were actively involved with the Trust. Second, David Burke, Dean Emeritus of the Nida Institute, acted as solid bookends for this project. Besides participating in the symposia, he was invaluable in their organization, coordinating a stellar list of participants and providing measured insight along the way. He then served as the chief editorial hand managing this publication. Third, this volume was impeccably worked through by Charles Houser, a consummate editor who eyed every detail. Finally, the contributors to this volume have been the musicians. They have brought their own artistry and expertise to a daunt-

ing composition, and together this collection bears witness to the genius, influence, and legacy of the King James Version.

John F. Kutsko and Philip H. Towner

The Editors to the Reader

Anyone writing about the King James Bible is forced to make a couple of arbitrary decisions. First, what should the 1611 landmark translation be called? The authors gathered together in this volume revealed a wide array of preferences along with interesting shorthand ways of referring to the translation, the most predominant by far were the Authorized Version (AV) and the King James Version/Bible (KJV/B). Both names have the advantage of being used everywhere in the English-speaking world where the 1611 translation is read. But both may be misleading to the general reader, for, as several of our authors make clear, the translation was never officially authorized by any legal or ecclesiastical body; and, as essential as he was to getting the project started, King James's ongoing involvement is less clear, and he certainly should not be mistaken as an active translator, something that might be inferred by naming a translation after him. In the end, the editors felt it best to allow the authors to choose between these two names as they saw fit rather than impose one name upon all our contributors.

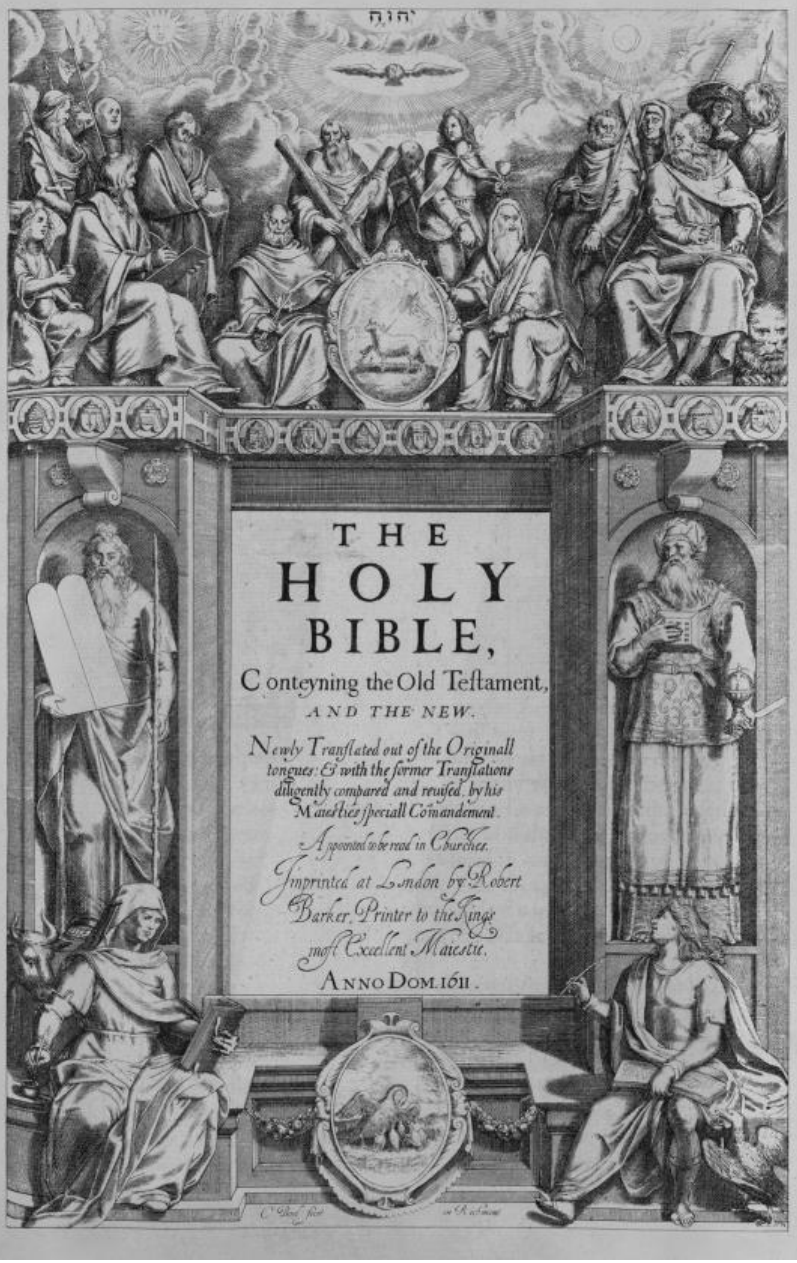
Another arbitrary decision the editors needed to make was to choose which version of the KJV/AV the authors should quote from when a specific printing was not being referenced. Many authors seemed to quote from their personal copies of the Bible, perhaps editions bestowed on them at confirmation years ago and now no longer in print. Here some imposition of editorial will seemed to be called for. Unless an author was intentionally quoting a specific printing for an obvious reason (such as a facsimile edition to make a point about original spelling), the editors have conformed quotations to *The Bible: Authorized King James Version* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997). Of the four strongly recommended editions listed in the bibliography (pp. 519–20), this seemed to be the best choice for nontechnical purposes because it is inexpensive and widely available, is a bare-bones text uncluttered by section headings and other modern "helps," contains the full Christian canon (including the

Apocrypha), uses modern British rather than American spelling, employs italics for the purposes intended by the original translators,[1] and is formatted in the traditional "verse style" where each numbered verse is slightly indented from the left margin and a special character (¶) is used to indicate a new paragraph. Readers should not infer too much from this editorial choice and are encouraged to cross-check Bible quotations with their own trusted editions or with one of the editions cited in the bibliography.

It should be noted, however, that quotations from the Bible's dedication ("To the Most High and Mighty Prince, James"), preface ("The Translators to the Reader"), the 1611 edition's other front matter, the chapter summaries, or the Bible's many marginal notes are not from any single edition but are taken from whichever edition or source the individual authors identify in their notes. The bibliography lists several resources for readers interested in examining these intriguing components of the KJV Bible more closely.

Notes

1. Keynoter Norton observed after spending many years editing the *New Cambridge Paragraph Bible* (2006) that the KJV's use of italics has "been a perpetual source of difficulty to editors and bemusement to readers. … Besides tradition, the only grounds for keeping them—and then only in the original form—is that they are the work of the translators, but these are poor reasons" (David Norton, *A Textual History of the King James Bible* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005], 162). Cambridge University Press, following Norton's recommendation, printed the *New Cambridge Paragraph Bible* without italics.


יהוה
THE
HOLY
BIBLE,
Conteyning the Old Teſtament,
AND THE NEW.
Newly Tranſlated out of the Originall tongues: & with the former Tranſlations diligently compared and reuiſed, by his Maieſties ſpeciall Comandement.
Appointed to be read in Churches.
Imprinted at London by Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings moſt Excellent Maieſtie.
ANNO DOM. 1611.

Rendering Voices
A Poem for the 400th Anniversary of the King James Bible

To begin on the Bible
To be caught by the rise of a huge wave breaking
To know all the conflict and chaos to be faced
If their book could not command
The nation, the language, in a foment of becoming.
They heard Scripture's ancient voices, remote,
Tasting of the desert,
Its longing, in a strange land.

Their task they called
A paradise of trees of life. Long hard years
They walked in this forest,
Dividing it into six sections,
Into exercise books, trading
Sigla and suggestions in rooms
Where kings had died and disciplines
Had been invented.

They threw strained eyes up at ceilings
Of hammer-beams, at gilt stars.
Every section was read aloud, the company
Some with eyes closed, some stroking pomaded beards,
Listening like poets at a workshop
For a false footfall, for any hint
Of ugliness. Only the words that formed
Like birds in the mouth, only they survived.

The ancient voices still arrive out of the past
Like a time capsule. They are smuggled
Into harsh places. They are raked over
On revisionist laptops. We bring to them
Immense science, but less confidence
That our words, put to the anvil, rubbed and polished
By the right number of learned men
Will last, or that they should.

Still the wave breaks over us
Shifting us in our chaos
Still it makes, in every age and tongue,
Insistent claims

In the beginning God
The Lord is my shepherd
Vanity of vanities
We beheld his glory
The glory as of the only begotten of the Father
Full of grace and truth.

My copy, given to me at three months old, is inscribed
In my godmother's hand. I treasure it. In student essays
I insist on the NRSV.
I download parables from *The Message*,
preach on them,
But it is the words that survived the tyrannous scrutiny
Of the beard-stroking poets, the birds in the mouth,
The words given me as a young child
That I will hear in my head when I am dying.

Christopher Southgate

Commissioned by the Society of Biblical Literature for their International Conference, King's College London, July 2011.

Dedicated to my godmother Barbara William-Olsson (1921–2010), who gave me my first copy of the King James Bible. Love suffers long and is kind.

The KJV at 400: Assessing Its Genius as Bible Translation and Its Literary Influence

David Norton

The King James Version: Its Prehistory and Origins

As an aid to understanding the genius of the King James Version (KJV), I offer here a sketch of what it is, how it was made, and how, after publication, it became the supreme English Bible. I conclude with some thoughts about one manifestation of its genius, its literary influence.[1]

The KJV began to be written when the Israelites moved beyond telling to writing down their beliefs and the stories of their heritage. This is the simple point we should never forget: the KJV is what it is primarily because of what the Jews and the early Christians wrote. It is a good book because they wrote good books. Its genius is, first of all, their genius.

It ought to be equally obvious that the KJV is the product of a second process that began with William Tyndale. In effect, it was drafted by many more than the fifty or so scholars who actually worked on it from 1604 onward. Most of what we read in it was written before 1604. I stress this not to diminish what the KJV translators did, but as a warning against seeing the KJV primarily as a product of the Jacobean moment. The KJV is the final form of the Reformation English translation, accomplished over more than eighty-five years. Its English genius is a collective creation.

The third process that created the KJV began at the Hampton Court conference of 1604 and concluded with the publication in 1611 of the first edition. The way the work was set up was of considerable importance. Here I am thinking of the contrast with the uneven results of the rather lackadaisical organization of the Bishops' Bible, and the failure of less grand attempts to revise the KJV in the middle of the seventeenth century. The

scale of the work and its formal organization ensured that scholars wanted to be involved in it and they worked methodically to a reasonably uniform end. Here the genius was James I. His ambitions and his politic desire to keep the various factions within the church cooperatively busy producing a work that itself might minimize factionalism was important. Still more important was his experience. In 1601 he had favored a new translation in a meeting of the general assembly of the Scottish Church,[2] but nothing had happened. I think that the experience of inaction here spurred him to do all he could to ensure the new proposal for a translation did not also fall by the wayside. This was why the work was set up on such a scale and with such clear instructions. Moreover, it was James's opposition to annotation that made the KJV free of doctrinal notes and therefore as theologically neutral as it could reasonably be. This was to be an important factor in its general acceptance.

The cream of the scholarly community and the breadth of the church were involved in the translation. I want now to give a glimpse of the mental world of the KJV translators, something that has been more often imagined than examined. The way it has been imagined is typified by Gustavus S. Paine's remark that "the great poetry of the age was all around the scholars as they worked on the Bible, was in their thought and feeling, and quickened the flow of their language."[3] Ignoring the KJV's origins in the 1520s, which was not a great period of English literature, this sees the KJV as inspired by Shakespeare and his contemporaries. A totally different mental world is evident in the work of the translator whose proposal at the Hampton Court conference led to the KJV, John Rainolds (sometimes spelled Reynolds). Here is part of the title of one of his works: *The Overthrow of Stage Plays … wherein is manifestly proved, that it is not only unlawful to be an actor, but a beholder of those vanities* (1599). The book itself is based on the Bible, church fathers, and the classics, and it shows no sign of firsthand knowledge of contemporary theater. Rainolds, of course, was a leading Puritan, but the mental world this suggests, steeped in scholarship and ignorant of contemporary vernacular literature, is, I think, generally right for the translators.

The library of another of the translators, William Branthwaite, gives a similar picture. Among its more than fourteen hundred books, there is John Heywood's immense satirical poem, *The Spider and the Fly* (1556), and one other work that looks at first sight like English literature, *Jack Up Land* (1536?), "compiled by the famous Geoffrey Chaucer"—but it is neither literature nor by Chaucer: it is a short anti-Catholic tract. What

he does have tells the same story as Rainolds's *Overthrow of Stage Plays*. Continental religious works in Latin dominate. There is an extensive—approaching exhaustive—collection of the church fathers, mostly in Latin, some in Greek. Also extensive is the collection of commentaries, medieval, Roman Catholic, and Protestant. Literature is represented by Greek and Latin classics. Nor does the diary kept by John Bois in his later years show any awareness of English literature. It begins with him in the middle of reading Augustine, and this continued for thirteen months. Later he spent the best part of a year reading perhaps the most extraordinary of the "near sixty grammars, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac; with some other few," that he had read,[4] the French scholar Budaeus's (Guillaume Budé) 967-page *Commentarii Linguae Graecae* (1529). He was at home in the past and in scholarship.

In short, the mental world of the translators was dominated by theology (both Protestant and Roman Catholic), scholarship, and the classics. Most, perhaps all, of them would have been astonished to discover they lived in a great age of English literature. Predominantly they thought and wrote in Latin, a language Miles Smith describes them as having been exercised in "almost from our very cradle."[5] Here we may remember another of the translators, John Overall, complaining "that he had spoken Latin so long, it was troublesome to him to speak English in a continued oration."[6] It was this world that equipped them to revise the preceding English translations into the KJV.

This is not to say that some of them did not write in English for preference: Bois's diary was in Latin, but that of his fellow translator of the Apocrypha, Samuel Ward, was in English. And some wrote English very well—Lancelot Andrewes in his sermons, Miles Smith in the preface to the KJV—but none wrote English like that of the KJV. Here we should remember the long process of drafting the KJV. William Tyndale, the prime English genius behind the KJV, was one of the great writers of English. His style is more like the KJV's, and once won praise from Thomas More, his archenemy and a powerful critic of his English: "these words walk lo very goodly by the hearer's ear, and they make a man amazed in a manner and somewhat to study and muse."[7]

I suggest that, with respect to their Greek and Latin scholarship—both of the languages and what was written in them—the KJV translators were as well or better equipped than modern scholars (except, of course, in matters such as knowledge of biblical manuscripts). I have just indicated the range and nature of Bois's scholarship. He wrote this of himself: "never do

I use my talents better than when I devote myself to the study of letters. Indeed, I can do a little in letters: outside letters I am nothing: outside letters what am I but the lowest of all animals? Go where the *genius* summons you."[8] I have left *genius* untranslated from the Latin; it might mean "talent," but "attendant spirit" is probably the best sense. This spirit informed the translators' work: it is one form of the genius behind the KJV.

Figure 1 shows a single example of Bois immersed in his own mental world, a page from his copy of Budaeus with his annotations. The intensity of the annotations is characteristic of every one of the 968 pages. Here he attends to every word, gives in full every reference, even adding page and line numbers, makes corrections or additions, including in one place a possible alternative Greek reading. It is the work of an obsessive philologist. One thing makes this page of special interest in relation to the KJV, the Greek word at the top, συμβιβάζω, one of several verbs discussed on the page. In all likelihood, this is because the translators discussed its meaning as it is used in Col 2:2. They considered whether to add "and instructed" to the Bishops' Bible's "being knit together in love"—something they eventually decided against. Bois noted that "the word συμβιβάζω signifies both at once, join together, and instruct, or teach: it is not inconsistent with the truth therefore, that the apostle took account of both meanings."[9] The key question was whether there was a deliberate play on the meaning of συμβιβάζω. Bois remembered this discussion when, in 1634, nearly a quarter of a century later, he saw in Budaeus a similar discussion of its meaning:

> The word συμβιβάζειν signifies to reconcile, and to draw together in friendship and agreement. … It also signifies to accommodate, and to bring together in harmony. … From a collation of the sacred prophets, it seems to mean to teach and to prove.[10]

Now in his 70s, his interest in languages and his memory for details were as sharp as ever. This is the kind of scholarship the translators brought to their work on the text.

The direct evidence of how the translators worked fits with this sketch. Here is the reasoning behind one word in the KJV of Matt 17:27, "go thou to the Sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up." From Tyndale to the Bishops' Bible, Jesus tells Peter to cast not a "hook" but an "angle." One of the makers of the KJV brought about the change by arguing that the Greek word means "an *hook*, and not an

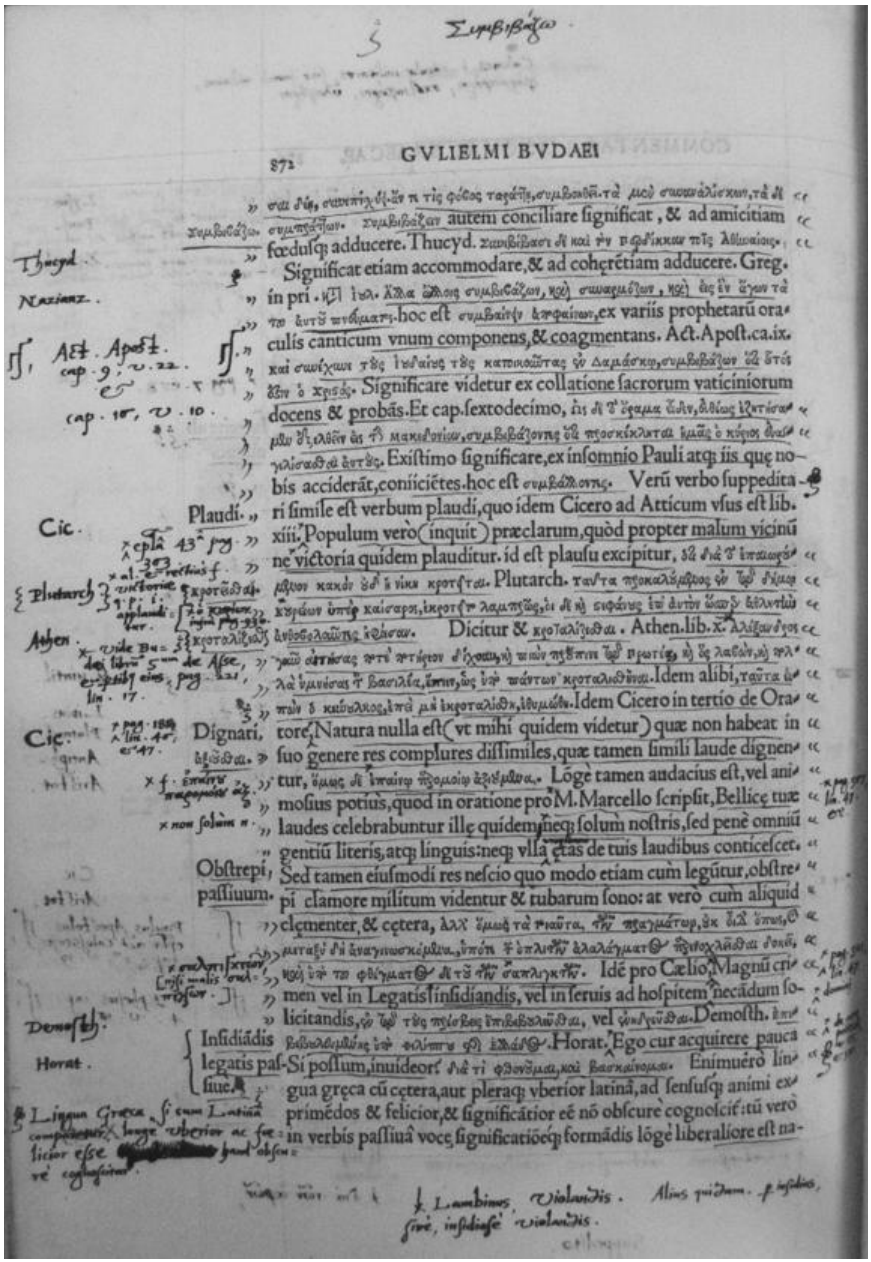


Figure 1. A page from John Bois's copy of Budaeus's *Commentarii Linguae Graecae* showing the owner's heavy annotations in Latin and Greek. From the collection of St John's College, Cambridge.

angle; if the *angle* be cast without the *hook*, there is not hope to catch the fish."[11] He supported this by citing the second-century Greek grammarian Julius Pollux, distinguishing the Greek noun used here from two others. The point is both scholarly and pithy in its attention to English meaning. "Angle" had changed from its original sense, a fishhook, to fishing gear. Now, as I said, this note comes from one of the makers of the KJV, but not from one of the King James translators. It is by Giles Lawrence, Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford. He assisted with the revision of the Bishops' Bible New Testament for its second edition (1572), where the reading is first found. He made twenty-nine such notes, often exactly explaining a KJV reading. It would be wonderful to have full notes of this sort, especially in relation to renderings that we might take to have been chosen for literary reasons.

Lawrence's notes show what is missing from the only other set of notes we have from a translator, John Bois's from the general meeting of the KJV translators. Bois sometimes records possible English translations, but his notes rarely deal with final decisions about the translation. Probably beginning from interest in the theological significance of some readings in the Epistles, he wrote down what interested him most in the translators' discussions, their work on the Greek; as a secondary linguistic interest he also sometimes noted English words and phrases. What he gives us is a vivid and, I believe, accurate report of *part* of the translators' thinking. They thought primarily in Latin, sometimes in Greek and English, and they thought about two languages, Greek and English. A quarter of the notes involve discussion of the Greek without any mention of a possible English translation—here the discussion of συμβιβάζω is representative. Many more mix discussion of the Greek with English possibilities. Refined understanding of the Greek was the translators' starting point even at this late stage of the work. The argument that they worked primarily to polish the English of the Bible *as English* is untenable set against these notes.

The Translators at Work: A Judicious Literalness

I want now to look at an example of the KJV translators' work in relation to that of their predecessors, and then to examine a tiny example of the excellence of the translation. Recognizing that his work was a draft, Tyndale was specific about the kind of revision needed: if others with better understanding "perceive in any places that I have not attained the very sense of

the tongue, or meaning of the Scripture, or have not given the right English word, that they put to their hands to amend it."[12] In their endeavor "to make a good [translation] better, or out of many good ones one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against,"[13] the KJV translators were putting their hands to amend their predecessors' work just as Tyndale had wished. Their work can be characterized as a judicious—rather than slavish—development of the translation's literal fidelity to the originals. What we see as fine English embodying "the beauty of holiness" (Ps 29:2) is, more often than not, to be accounted for in these terms. "More often than not" is a crucial phrase here. Sometimes there are revisions that appear to be stylistic, and there are also revisions that appear to be changes for change's sake.

All this can be seen in the story of the fall, Gen 3:1–13. At first sight it appears that the KJV translators did very little, contributing only seven words and one phrase (given here in italics) not found in their predecessors:

> 1 Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, "Yea, hath God said, 'Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'" 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, "Ye shall not *surely* die. 5 For God doth know that in *the* day ye eat thereof, *then* your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." 6 And *when* the woman saw that the tree was good for *food*, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, *she* took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.
>
> 8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. 9 And the LORD God called *un*to Adam, and said unto him, "Where art thou?" 10 And he said, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself. 11 And he said, "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?" 12 And the man said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." 13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, "*What is this that thou hast done*?" And the woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."

Two of these innovations are particularly instructive. Here is how the successive translators rendered this question, which in Hebrew is literally, "what this you have done?" (v. 13):

Hebrew	מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂית
Tyndale	Wherefore didst thou so?
Coverdale	Wherefore hast thou done this?
Great Bible	Why hast thou done this?
Geneva	= Great
Bishops'	= Great
KJV	What *is* this *that* thou hast done?

The earlier renderings get the sense in good English, but the KJV makes the English a literal equivalent of the Hebrew, and marks with italics the two words it has had to add.

"Ye shall not surely die" (v. 4) translates a Hebrew infinitive followed by a future tense, literally "not to die you will die," an intensive form. Here are the successive renderings:

Hebrew	לֹא־מוֹת תְּמֻתוּן
Tyndale	Tush, ye shall not die
Coverdale	Tush, ye shall not die the death
Great Bible	Ye shall not die the death
Geneva	Ye shall not die at all
Bishops'	= Great
KJV	Ye shall not surely die

Tyndale brilliantly imagined the persuasively scornful tone created by the intensive form but was too colloquial for his successors. In 1535 Coverdale followed Luther with "die the death," the nearest English can get to a literal translation, but he lost the tone in the Great Bible when he rejected "tush." Geneva, anxious about the comprehensibility of "die the death," gave an unsuccessful paraphrase and noted the phrase as a Hebraism in its later editions. The KJV found a way of rendering the text that got the effect without the colloquialism: "surely" is easily given an appropriately mocking stress. This is not quite as brilliant as Tyndale but well demonstrates the translators' sensitivity to the Hebrew and to English ways of emulating its effect.

Now, it would be wrong to assume from the very few changes in the passage that are original to the KJV that the translators did very little.

One needs only to read Bois's notes to see that intense discussion frequently went into readings that were, in the end, left unchanged (again the discussion of συμβιβάζω is representative). It is also limiting, I think, to take an archaeological view of the translation, identifying where words and phrases first appeared, and see it as just a patchwork of their predecessors, with Tyndale as the bedrock, and Coverdale's work in the Great Bible also contributing a great deal. It is more enlightening to think in terms of how much work the KJV translators actually did. If we put their work against their basic English text, the 1602 Bishops' Bible, a truer picture emerges.

Here is the 1602 text with the KJV's revised choice of words given in italics, and the words deleted from the 1602 text struck through; the underlined revisions, including deletions where no new wording is given, make the version more literal; the rest seem to be concerned with style or are, perhaps, changes for change's sake:

> 1 ~~And~~ *Now* the serpent was ~~subtler~~ *more subtle* than ~~every~~ *any* beast of the field which the Lord God had made, and he said unto the woman, "Yea, hath God said, 'Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, "We *may* eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 but ~~as for~~ *of* the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ~~peradventure~~ ye die.'"
>
> 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, "Ye shall not *surely* die ~~the death~~. 5 For God doth know that ~~the same day that~~ *in the day* ye eat thereof, *then* your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." 6 And *when* the woman, seeing that the ~~same~~ tree was good ~~to eat of~~ *for food*, and *that it was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, *she* took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband ~~being~~ with her, and he did eat. 7 ~~Then~~ *And* the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.
>
> 8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God, amongst the trees of the garden. 9 And the Lord God called *unto* Adam, and said unto him, "Where art thou?" 10 ~~which~~ *And he* said, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and *I* was afraid because I was naked, and *I* hid myself." 11 And he said, "Who told thee that thou wast naked? hast thou ~~not~~ eaten of the ~~same~~ tree ~~concerning the which~~ whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat ~~of it~~?" 12 And ~~Adam~~ *the man* said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with

> me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat." 13 And the Lord God said unto the woman: "~~Why hast thou done this~~? *What is this that thou hast done*?" And the woman said, "The serpent beguiled me and I did eat."

This is revision that puts literalness before anything else. The few changes that do not affect literalness are very small touches: the restoration of Geneva's "more subtle" for "subtler" and "any" for "every" look to me like changes for change's sake. The three others all relate to the Hebrew conjunction *waw*, and are dictated by a sense of the flow of the passage.

In passing, the treatment of *waw* can be seen as a guide to the literalness of a translation. In this passage, the Hebrew has *waw* 34 times, most closely reflected by the KJV using "and" 31 times; Geneva and the Great Bible have "and" the fewest times, 23 and 22, respectively.

One final observation about this passage. "She gave me of the tree and I did eat" is an almost exactly literal translation of the Hebrew (arguably "she gave to me" would have been more literal). It is the joint work of Tyndale and Coverdale, first appearing in this form in the Great Bible. It is also a line of poetry, an iambic pentameter. Milton recognized this and used it unchanged in *Paradise Lost* (10.143). It is one of many fine pieces of English that have come down to us through or from the KJV that exist because they are good literal translations.

In keeping with this observation, I suggest that, as a general rule, when something in the KJV appears to us to be a particularly good piece of literary translation, it is also good literal translation. Similarly, literalness is often the explanation for what looks like bad translation. "Ho, ho, come forth and flee from the land of the north" (Zech 2:6) starts unfortunately, lapses into an anapestic jingle, and concludes with a poor rhyme. The culprit is Geneva: all the other versions have Coverdale's "O get you forth, O flee from the land of the north," which is quite adequate English achieved by turning the Hebrew's "Ho"s into "O"s and and separating them. But the KJV is also guilty: it preferred Geneva's reading—because it is more literal. Here is the Hebrew: הוֹי הוֹי וְנָסוּ מֵאֶרֶץ צָפוֹן. "Ho, ho" simply transliterates the Hebrew rallying call. Literally, the Hebrew continues, "and flee from the land of the north." Geneva, not willing to treat the Hebrew conjunction flexibly, judged "come forth" was necessary to complete the sense, but marked it with italics as an addition. The KJV translators, possibly deaf to the cacophony, but probably thinking only of the Hebrew, accepted this as the best possible rendering.[14]

At the opposite end of the spectrum, here is one of the KJV's great cadences from the comparison between the man who built his house on rock and the man who built his house on sand at the end of the Sermon on the Mount: "and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it" (Matt 7:27). Part of what makes it so powerful is, of course, the way it echoes the verse describing how the house built on rock did not fall. It is a very simple sentence fragment, almost entirely monosyllabic and native English in origin, six brief statements joined by the simplest conjunction of them all, "and." Yet the rhythm and sound are magnificent, creating what is said: you can feel the storm and its effect. The first four statements, describing the storm, make up two pairs. The first pair sets up a simple pattern—conjunction, subject, verb—that appears to be continued in "and the winds blew." But then the pattern breaks with "and beat upon that house": this belongs with "and the winds blew," so separating these fragments from the first pair and necessitating a strong pause after "the floods came." The unexpected alliterative suddenness of "beat" makes it the most forceful word in this part. This is not just rhythm or cadence for the sake of it: it is dynamic writing that creates the feeling of the storm. "Descended" contributes to the effect: it makes the first fragment the longest and slowest, so the remaining fragments take on speed and urgency by contrast: the storm is building in several ways.

Coming after this, "and it fell" is utterly simple and, it would seem, final. What more is there to say but to echo the pattern from two verses earlier: "for it was founded upon the sand"? But again there is a surprise: "and great was the fall of it." "Great" is the strong word, the high point of the rhythm, in part because it does not come where normal English prose order would put it, at the end of the sentence: "and its fall was great." In rhythmic terms, the voice falls away from this point with the words "was the fall of it." Here, as with "beat upon that house," there is a cadence, literally a falling rhythm: the fall or de-cadence has not just been stated, it has been re-created in the rhythm.

This is an obviously fine piece of English writing, so we should ask who created it and whether it is the result of trying to make the Bible stylish. Most important is the imagination that created the whole comparison, Jesus' imagination. He may, perhaps, never have written a word except with his finger on the ground (John 8:6, 8), yet he was a great writer. Next comes Matthew, reteller and translator of the comparison, here writing

with a literary skill that is missing from Luke's version (Luke 6:47–49). Matthew's Greek dictates most of the passage:

> καὶ κατέβη ἡ βροχὴ / καὶ ἦλθον οἱ ποταμοὶ / καὶ ἔπνευσαν οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ
> and came down the rain / and came the rivers / and blew the winds, and
>
> προσέκοψαν / τῇ οἰκίᾳ ἐκείνῃ, / καὶ ἔπεσεν / καὶ ἦν ἡ πτῶσις / αὐτῆς / μεγάλη.
> beat against / the house that, / and it fell, / and was the fall / of it / great.

The translators could have copied the Greek in making the subject follow the verb in the first two phrases, but not in the third because "winds" would then seem to be the object of "blew"; only a loose translation of the Greek word would make the Greek word order possible: "and raged the wind." In short, the word order is as close as English can reasonably come to that of the Greek. There is one exception: "great." This could easily go at the end of the sentence, as in the Greek; both Geneva and Rheims give, "and the fall thereof was great." Since the placing of "great" is crucial to the rhythmic effect, we must set this down as a piece of literary translation.

Another test of literal against literary quality is how inevitable a word choice seems in relation to the Greek words. Here the easiest—but not the only—test is provided by the other English words the KJV translators used for the Greek words. By this test, words such as "rain," "winds," and "house" are inevitable literal choices, and "great" by far the most probable. The one latinate (but by this time well-established) polysyllable, "descended," is common enough in the KJV's vocabulary, occurring in various forms thirty-eight times in the two Testaments, but it might well have been "came down," which the KJV uses three times more often for this Greek verb; it could even, at a stretch, have been "fell," a word the KJV used once for this verb and that it had precedent for in the Geneva Bible. "Beat upon" is the verb we should look hardest at because its alliterative suddenness is crucial to the first part of the verse. Nowhere else does the KJV translate this verb in this way. Is "beat upon" therefore a piece of literary translation? The Greek verb's general sense is "strike against," which the KJV gives five times as "stumble" or "stumble at," and twice as "dash." I suggest that the translators chose "beat upon" because it had a continuous sense, a succession of blows, needed by the context but absent from most of the possible synonyms. A verb such as "struck" would have been apt for a single bolt of lightning, not for a torrent of blows. Literal translation needed "beat upon." The alliteration of "beat" was a lucky accident.

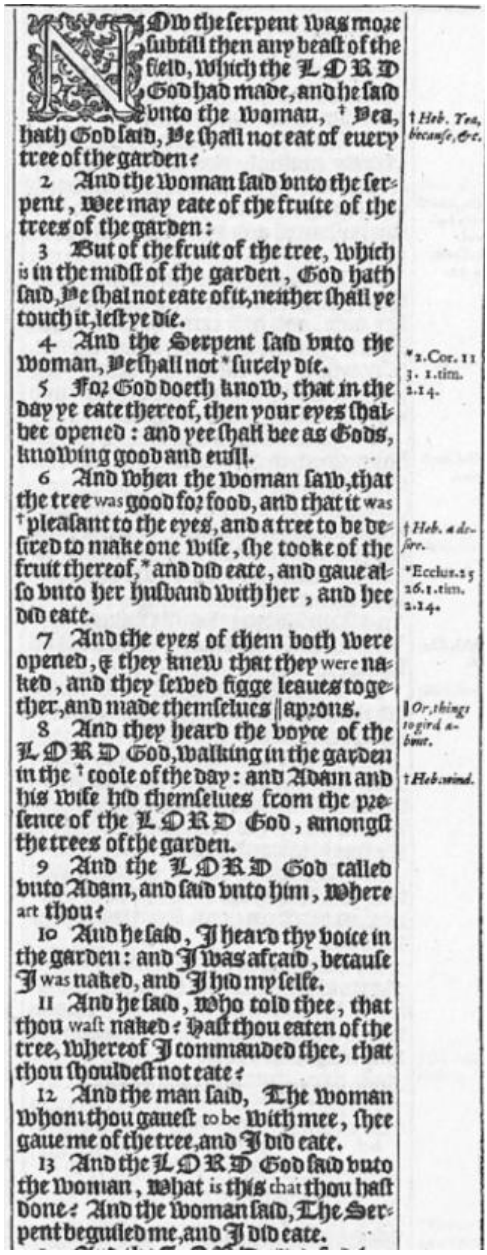
The English creator of this small triumph of meaning, rhythm, and sound was, perhaps surprisingly, Archbishop Matthew Parker, the prime mover behind the Bishops' Bible. Tyndale had created most of the verse at his second attempt,[15] but had left the first part as "and abundance of rain descended." "Abundance" represents a failure to translate literally through desire to state the ferociousness of the storm. It was Parker who made Tyndale literal.

It would be going too far to suggest that Tyndale thought of "and the rain descended" but rejected it because it did not seem to sufficiently describe the storm, but there is an implication here that we should pay heed to: the translators may not always have recognized that their work was as good as we now find it.

I suggest that the KJV, the collective work of three generations of translators, is primarily a very good literal translation that in places, as a secondary matter, shows literary touches. The translators did not think in terms of creating literary English. What concerned them was "proper English," that is, the most precise English possible to reveal the meaning and reflect the words of the original language texts.[16] Their collective genius lay in doing this so well. Over time, as a genius of a different sort, a tutelary spirit, their creation was a major factor in shaping the English language and forming English literary taste.

Literalness Shown and Seen

In 1611 the KJV was not what it became. Wherever we look in the first edition (and to varying degrees in subsequent editions), the KJV is full of signs that it is a literal translation. Figure 2 presents the fall narrative as it was printed in the first edition. The small roman type is the equivalent of the italics noted earlier, as in "what *is* this *that* thou hast done?" (v. 13). As the printing shows, these are not stressed words but de-emphasized words, necessary for English sense but not present in the Hebrew. Effectively what this says to readers is that the English is a guide to the Hebrew: take out the added words and you have, literally, the Hebrew text. The literal renderings and the alternative versions in the margin say the same thing with qualifications. At verse 6 we find that "pleasant" in the text is literally "a desire" in the Hebrew, and at verse 8 that "the cool of the day" is really "the wind of the day." This says to readers that the text is not quite literal, and again invites them to see or imagine the Hebrew. Alternative readings such as "things to gird about" for "aprons" (v. 5) underline that the English is



NOw the ſerpent was more ſubtill then any beaſt of the field, which the LORD God had made, and he ſaid vnto the woman, † Yea, hath God ſaid, Ye ſhall not eat of euery tree of the garden?

† Heb. Yea, becauſe, &c.

2 And the woman ſaid vnto the ſerpent, Wee may eate of the fruite of the trees of the garden:

3 But of the fruit of the tree, which is in the midſt of the garden, God hath ſaid, Ye ſhal not eate of it, neither ſhall ye touch it, leſt ye die.

4 And the Serpent ſaid vnto the woman, Ye ſhall not * ſurely die.

* 2. Cor. 11 3. 1. tim. 2. 14.

5 For God doeth know, that in the day ye eate thereof, then your eyes ſhalbee opened: and yee ſhall bee as Gods, knowing good and euill.

6 And when the woman ſaw, that the tree was good for food, and that it was † pleaſant to the eyes, and a tree to be deſired to make one wiſe, ſhe tooke of the fruit thereof, * and did eate, and gaue alſo vnto her huſband with her, and hee did eate.

† Heb. a deſire.

* Eccluſ. 25 26. 1. tim. 2. 14.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, & they knew that they were naked, and they ſewed figge leaues together, and made themſelues ‖ aprons.

‖ Or, things to gird about.

8 And they heard the voyce of the LORD God, walking in the garden in the † coole of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themſelues from the preſence of the LORD God, amongſt the trees of the garden.

† Heb. wind.

9 And the LORD God called vnto Adam, and ſaid vnto him, Where art thou?

10 And he ſaid, I heard thy voice in the garden: and I was afraid, becauſe I was naked, and I hid my ſelfe.

11 And he ſaid, Who told thee, that thou waſt naked? Haſt thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee, that thou ſhouldeſt not eate?

12 And the man ſaid, The woman whom thou gaueſt to be with mee, ſhee gaue me of the tree, and I did eate.

13 And the LORD God ſaid vnto the woman, What is this that thou haſt done? And the woman ſaid, The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eate.

Figure 2. The story of the fall (Gen 3:1–13) from a 1611 printing of the KJB. Collection of the American Bible Society.

an approximation of the original, not the word of God but a guide to its possible meanings. The beginnings of the verses also proclaim literalism. Eleven of the fourteen begin with "And," and there are thirty-four "ands" in these verses. In normal English writing this would be deplored as bad style, so the New English Bible (NEB), which had the benefit of a literary panel, does not begin any of these verses with "and."

We could go on noting signs of literalism such as transliterations, notably "almug" and "algum" trees (1 Kgs 10:11, 12; 2 Chr 2:8; 9:10, 11—most translators give in here and transliterate). There are grammatical inconsistencies or obscurities, for instance in the use of pronouns, and the mixing of past and present tenses in Mark (regularized by most modern translators). Then there are bits of nonsense where the translators give up translating and say to the reader, here are the words, make of them what you can. For example, here is Job 36:32–33: "With clouds he covereth the light, and commandeth it *not to shine*, by *the cloud* that cometh betwixt. The noise thereof showeth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapor." Basil Willey, a member of the literary panel for NEB, commented on this:

> Those who exalt Bible English as the grandest and noblest in our literature ignore this kind of thing. And there is something else they overlook, namely the constant failure of the old translators to translate, i.e. to render Hebrew or Greek idioms, constructions and modes of speech by English counterparts. Too often they simply transliterate and give us mongrel English which we tolerate only because we are accustomed to hearing it in church.[17]

What all this literalism proclaims is that the KJV is an approximation—in the strong sense of coming as close to as possible—of the original. Now, the root meaning of *translate* is to carry across. We usually think of this as carrying across from somewhere else to our place, from there to here. If the original is historical, the carrying across is also from then to now. But through the qualities I have just highlighted, the KJV also does the reverse: it carries the reader from here to there and from now to then. By inviting the reader to see the original behind the English it makes us feel as if we are readers of the Hebrew and the Greek. At the same time as the originals are translated in one direction the reader is translated in the opposite direction. Few Bible translations do this as strongly as the KJV.

To put the point another way: the KJV teaches its readers Hebrew—Hebrew much more than Greek since New Testament Greek is also influ-

enced by Hebrew, and the 1611 Old Testament has 4,072 notes beginning "Heb.," whereas the New Testament has 113 beginning "Gr.").

One might object that the effect of hearing the KJV is different from the effect of reading it, and that there is plenty of evidence of writing for rhythmic effect. Consider the phrase, "I say unto you." It occurs 139 times, whereas "I say to you" occurs four times. The translators from Tyndale to the KJV had an almost entirely free choice in terms of meaning between "unto" and "to," so the preference for "I say unto you" was clearly for rhythm. I choose this example because there is no question of it being influenced by the demands of literal translation, and because it is a clear example of a rhythmic resource that is not available to modern translators because "unto" is archaic.

Nevertheless, what I have been describing fits with the picture I have given of the way the translators worked, and it also fits with evidence of the early use of and response to the KJV. Scholars treated the various English translations as approximations to the originals, so one might be as good as another. For example, Lancelot Andrewes, one of the KJV translators, took his text from the Geneva Bible when preaching his Christmas sermon in front of James in 1622. In the sermon itself he typically refers to the text in Latin, and he makes up his own English versions as it suits him. Perhaps more remarkably, Archbishop Laud, the man chiefly responsible for the suppression of the Geneva Bible, went on using Geneva until 1629. Quotations from the Bible in English are typically inaccurate until the middle of the eighteenth century. Critics discussing literary qualities of the Bible used the KJV as an approximation in a different way. Often unable to read the original Hebrew, they let the KJV stand as proxy for the originals even while deriding it as having "all the disadvantages of an old prose translation."[18]

Both scholars and people in the churches found the KJV's language difficult and unnatural because of its literalness. Decades after the KJV was published, John Selden commented on this literalism and the popular reaction to it:

> There is no book so translated as the Bible for the purpose. If I translate a French book into English, I turn it into English phrase and not into French English. "Il fait froid": I say 'tis cold, not it makes cold, but the Bible is rather translated into English words than into English phrase. The Hebraisms are kept and the phrase of that language is kept … which is well

> enough so long as scholars have to do with it, but when it comes among the common people, Lord what gear [mockery] do they make of it![19]

In short, the KJV of 1611 was not what we see and hear it as, and for about one hundred fifty years the clergy, scholars, and the people thought of it very differently from the way we do.

From Favored Text to Cultural Icon

Various factors changed the KJV from unnatural and literal to admired and loved literary and religious English, and from an approximation of the Scriptures to being the very word of Scripture. Popular familiarity was primary. We should think of this first as education. Thomas More berated Tyndale for misusing English words, either not using words that properly represented New Testament Greek or forcing his words to be taken in a sense they did not have in English. The argument was really about Tyndale's refusal to use ecclesiastical words such as *priest*, but More pushed it to its linguistic extreme, concluding that "with such provision he may change chin into cheek and belly into back, and every word into other at his own pleasure, if all England list now to go to school with Tyndale to learn English, and else not."[20] In other words, Tyndale could use English however he liked—provided the English people were willing to learn their English from him. The truth is that this did happen, that all England was pleased or willing to go to school with Tyndale and his successors to read the Bible. Not all its words were easy, so the people had help from dictionaries such as Robert Cawdray's *Table Alphabetical … teaching the true writing and understanding of hard usual English words borrowed from the Hebrew, Greek …, etc., which they shall hear and read in Scriptures* (1604), and Thomas Wilson's *A Christian Dictionary* (1612), which made the same point: "when in their reading or hearing Scriptures [the vulgar] meet with such principal words as carry with them the marrow and pith of our holy religion, they stick at them as at an unknown language" (fol. A6v).

The learning was more than a matter of vocabulary. For the most part the KJV is made up of familiar colloquial English words, but they are often used in strange ways because of the literalism. Here what we have seen in the KJV margin was an educational aid, teaching bits of Hebrew. Of course the Geneva notes provided much more substantial aid, and these were what the people missed most in the KJV. The people were also learn-

ing biblical English simply through that most basic educational method, constant hearing and reading.

Some school children were also being taught rhetoric through the Bible, notably from John Smith's *Mystery of Rhetoric Unveiled* (1656). All the figures of speech are illustrated from Latin, English, and biblical examples, "conducing very much to the right understanding of the sense of the letter of the Scripture (the want whereof occasions many dangerous errors this day)" (title page). Smith assures his students "that the holy Scripture is not barren of, but abounds with tropes and figures of all sorts, as containing the most excellent and sublimest eloquence" (fol. A5r-v). What we now think of as parallelism is present under both "synonymia," which includes "synonymy of sentences," and "exergasia," repetition. "Hebraism" is included as a figure, and the book concludes with a section illustrated only from the Bible, "pathopoeia," "a form of speech whereby the speaker moves the mind of his hearers to some vehemency of affection." This is what would later be admired as the sublime. The desire to include especially effective biblical verses has led Smith beyond ordinary figures to admiration of effect. His biblical quotations are mostly from the KJV, but sometimes echo Geneva or are his own original versions. Literary admiration of the originals is being taught, with the KJV being taken as a variable representation of them.

This kind of education, especially education by familiarity through lifetime immersion, was slowly and inevitably changing the KJV from alien to naturalized. Among the people, it was becoming a standard of language at the same time as it was changing from being an approximation of the Scriptures, a version, into being *the* Bible. Jonathan Swift commented on this in 1712. He quotes the Earl of Oxford's "observation, that if it were not for the Bible and Common Prayer Book in the vulgar tongue, we should hardly be able to understand any thing that was written among us an hundred years ago," and adds: "which is certainly true: for those books, being perpetually read in churches, have proved a kind of standard for language, especially to the common people."[21]

This could have happened to the Geneva Bible had Rainolds's proposal at the Hampton Court conference had the effect I think he intended—getting Geneva accepted as the official Bible of the church. We eulogize what we have in the KJV because of what the process of time has made of it rather than because it was uniquely good. However, it is questionable whether Geneva could have had the same longevity because it became so identified with a particular faction of the church—the faction that England turned

its back on decisively with the Restoration. It lacked what was probably the KJV's most important quality, its theological neutrality. Mostly without dogmatic and sectarian notes, the KJV could be all things to all Protestants. It prioritized the text, and sects could add notes to it as they wished.

Perhaps the most striking thing in Swift's comment is the statement that "we should hardly be able to understand any thing that was written among us an hundred years ago." It sounds like overstatement—do we have much trouble reading the English of 1911?—yet there is a real truth to it. As far as the educated Augustan Englishman was concerned, there was an enormous gulf between his era's English and that of the Bible—or of Shakespeare (we might remember John Dryden writing in 1679 that "it must be allowed to the present age that the tongue in general is so much refined since Shakespeare's time that many of his words and more of his phrases are scarce intelligible").[22]

There is evidence from the 1750s and 1760s that some of the vocabulary of the Bible that is standard English to us had indeed become obsolete or archaic in Augustan English. Here are some examples: "heritage," "ponder," "warfare," "laden," "avenge," and "unwittingly." What the *Oxford English Dictionary* observes of "unwittingly," that it was "in very frequent use c1380–1630, and from c1815," is, in general terms, true of all these words. They all died and then were born again. Their rebirth in common English came from their continued currency in the KJV.

Such examples speak eloquently of the KJV's influence on English, strongly suggesting how it worked as a standard. It not only taught us Hebraic or biblical ways of speaking and writing, it also preserved English that would otherwise have been lost. In another act of "translation," like Noah's ark it carried some English words over the flood of Augustanism. Miles Smith seems to have been aware of the translators' potential influence on English vocabulary when he wrote of their decision not to "say, as it were, unto certain words, 'Stand up higher, have a place in the Bible always,' and to others of like quality, 'Get ye hence, be banished for ever.' "[23] I do not know how many specific examples of this sort one might find, nor do I suppose that this effect is unique to the Bible, but I do think they suggest a large yet scarcely perceptible story about the KJV's effect on English. We should keep in mind not just what the Bible has *given* us but what it has *kept* for us. It is difficult to imagine how our language would have been without the Tyndale tradition embodied in the KJV—in large part because we are so accustomed to the language we have and therefore find it difficult to observe.

Here, then, we have two aspects of the genius of the English Bible as embodied in the KJV, that it taught us a new English and helped to teach us our old English. It did this because of its monopoly on the consciousness of the English-speaking peoples.

A Question of Influence

Finally, I want to offer a few thoughts on the KJV as a literary influence. The word *influence* can lead us astray because it implies a dynamic effect, making the way a work of literature is written different from what it otherwise would have been. It takes us into the psychology of artistic creation. The relationships between the Bible and literature are more varied than this. The Bible can be a source, whether elaborated as in *Paradise Lost*, or subverted as in D. H. Lawrence's *The Man Who Died*. Its sayings can be deliberately used to garnish a piece of writing. And so on. It is sometimes better to think of it as a presence than as an influence. Another danger is that the idea of influence involves power, so discussion of the KJV's influence can turn into an exercise in praise of the KJV, distracting from real insight into how the work of literature works in relation to the Bible. Moreover, thinking about the KJV as an influence may also make us forget that the Bible's presence in the arts may come from a range of Bibles and from nonbiblical sources. My grandson knows the story of Noah's ark from being given a model ark before he was two years old. Older children may well know the story of the fall from *Simpsons Bible Stories*, adults of a certain age may know Ps 137 from Boney M (1978).

We may also forget that there are a lot of things that we are accustomed to in literature that are rarely if ever found in the Bible. Two of the commonest elements of our most familiar form of written narrative, the novel, are missing, namely accounts of the minutiae of daily lives and of the thoughts and feelings of individuals. Here is an example of what we do *not* get in the Bible. It is from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* when Lady Catherine de Bourgh calls at Netherfield to tell Elizabeth Bennet that she is not to marry Darcy:

> After sitting for a moment in silence, [Lady Catherine] said very stiffly to Elizabeth,
>
> "I hope you are well, Miss Bennet. That lady I suppose is your mother."
>
> Elizabeth replied very concisely that she was.

> "And *that* I suppose is one of your sisters."
> "Yes, madam," said Mrs Bennet, delighted to speak to Lady Catherine. (vol. 3, ch. 14)

Except at Ruth 2:4, the Bible never gives us ordinary words of greeting ("I hope you are well, Miss Bennet"). It never tells us how characters speak ("said very stiffly") or why they speak ("delighted to speak to Lady Catherine"), and, in most translations if not in the originals, it almost never indicates their tone of voice ("and *that* I suppose"). We could go on thinking in this way. The Bible rarely tells us what a person looks like—we know that Saul was "a choice young man … higher than any of the people" (1 Sam 9:2), and that David "was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to" (1 Sam 16:12), but even such sparse details are rare. We are hardly ever told what a beautiful or stormy day it was, and so on. The daily stuff of literature is mostly absent.

So much by way of prologue. I want to finish by thinking about one of the most distinctive features of the Bible as literature, repetition. At the linguistic level, it makes the Hebrew superlative, as in "song of songs." Along with the cognate accusative, as in "die the death," it is a form of intensification. At the stylistic level, as parallelism, it is the basis of Hebrew poetry. And it is a common element in the large structures of the Bible, from the two creation stories through to the four Gospels. Leaving aside the superlative, one of the effects of this repetition is approximation, now in the sense of being roughly like. The repetitions of story, as in the Gospels, imply that things roughly corresponding to what is narrated happened and that words roughly like those attributed to characters were said. One is left to imagine the real truth behind the words. The stylistic repetitions, so often of the same thing in different words, suggest that words are a guide to truth, not truth itself. You can say something this way, you can say it that way, so the words point at the truth but are not truth itself. Again truth lies behind the words. There is a kind of equality in the multiple ways of saying things that we might link with the paratactic nature of Hebrew: lacking subordination, it effectively says that all clauses and sentences are equal. In passing, we find the same kind of thing in the way the KJV translators worked, not striving for a one-to-one consistency of words, but being content to vary their vocabulary. For the book of truth, these are paradoxical effects. Every word, every character matters; yet the text, over and over, says, the truth is not in me: find it through me.

Parallelism is especially interesting to look at in relation to English literature because it is particularly (though not exclusively) Hebraic, is finely represented in the KJV, is generally found in writers who make substantial use of the Bible, is often not considered good style (the NEB's literary panel tried to get rid of it), and because looking at parallelism in relation to similar English writing perhaps gives insight into how it works in the Bible.

D. H. Lawrence came from a strong Congregational background, wrote vividly about the powerful hold biblical language had on him, and often turned to the Bible for titles and content of his works. Here is one of his poems written in Taos, New Mexico, which contains an obvious biblical reference, some religious reflection, and writing that is somewhat like parallelism. It tells of him and his dog Bibbles seeing a blue jay:

The Blue Jay

The blue jay with a crest on his head
Comes round the cabin in the snow.
He runs in the snow like a bit of blue metal,
Turning his back on everything.

From the pine-tree that towers and hisses like a pillar of shaggy cloud
Immense above the cabin
Comes a strident laugh as we approach, this little black dog and I.
So halts the little black bitch on four spread paws in the snow
And looks up inquiringly into the pillar of cloud,
With a tinge of misgiving.
Ca-a-a! comes the scrape of ridicule out of the tree.

What voice of the Lord is that, from the tree of smoke?

Oh Bibbles, little black bitch in the snow,
With a pinch of snow in the groove of your silly snub nose,
What do you look at *me* for?
What do you look at me for, with such misgiving?

It's the blue jay laughing at us,
It's the blue jay jeering at us, Bibs.

Every day since the snow is here
The blue jay paces round the cabin, very busy, picking up bits,
Turning his back on us all,

And bobbing his thick dark crest about the snow, as if darkly saying:
I ignore those folk who look out.

You acid-blue metallic bird,
You thick bird with a strong crest
Who are you?
Whose boss are you, with all your bully way?
You copper-sulphate blue-bird!

In talking to students we probably think we have done the most important thing when we have explained the pillar of cloud—"and the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them the way" (Exod 13:21)—and invited the students to think about the blue jay being in the pillar of cloud rather than God. They might begin to find it rather a funny poem—which it is—but they would be unlikely to realize that under that light tone Lawrence also has a quite serious sense of the divinity in, especially, natural things, whether birds, beasts, or flowers.

We can do other things, such as using it to make the kind of point I made earlier from *Pride and Prejudice*: it is full of closely observed vividly created detail—"pillar of *shaggy* cloud," "a pinch of snow in the groove of your silly snub nose," and "*Ca-a-a!* comes the scrape of ridicule out of the tree," where "scrape" brilliantly echoes and describes the sound of the bird's cry (and one might notice in the final words that Lawrence likes the anapaestic rhythm that is so common in the Bible—"I say unto you," "out of the tree").

It is not an obviously parallelistic poem but has enough in it to be useful. The second half particularly is full of repetition, most obviously:

What do you look at *me* for?
What do you look at me for, with such misgiving?

It's the blue jay laughing at us,
It's the blue jay jeering at us, Bibs.

"What do you look at me for, with such misgiving?" could be analyzed as a "what's more" line,[24] though there is a change of focus from "*me*" to the way Bibbles is looking. The second pair looks like a simple parallelism, but what is striking is the development of definition in the change from "laughing" to "jeering." Lawrence's parallelism in effect replaces the first

line: it takes us on a little thought adventure as he and we discover the exact nature of the laughter.

This is a clue to the whole poem. To begin with the bird is simply the blue jay, just what any American would call it. In line three it is "like a bit of blue metal." Then in the final lines, as a way of finally discovering what it is, this is repeated and added to, "you acid-blue metallic bird," and then is perfectly phrased in the final exclamation, "you copper-sulphate blue-bird!" It is a beautiful line to say, and it is as if the true nature of the bird has finally been discovered. The thought adventure of the poem is complete, we have reached the definitive description. Though the adventure matters more than the final discovery, the overall effect is of repetition leading to precision. This seems to me different from biblical parallelism. Instead of being a process, it works to create intensity of suggestion, suggestion rather than precision, approximation rather than exactness. Both are like a dance, but Lawrence's dance is a waltz across the floor, whereas biblical parallelism dances on one spot, then, without transition, dances on another spot.

This is not the standard view of parallelism, but I hope it shows the value of discussions of the Bible and literature that pay close attention to how each is working, and so illuminate both. The second moral is much simpler: if we do not read the KJV, substantial parts of literature will be dead to us. But I say this with hesitation. The KJV became a dynamic cultural presence—a genius within English-speaking cultures—because it was a fine translation that approximated the originals exceptionally well; and it became great literature as a secondary matter because of our ancestors' intense familiarity with it. It has a literary life only because it is—or was—*the* book of religion.

Notes

1. Some parts of this paper, a combined version of three addresses given at the SBL symposia, repeat material and ideas from my *History of the Bible as Literature* (2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) and *The King James Bible: A Short History from Tyndale to Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). I have used modernized spelling and punctuation throughout. The page from John Bois's copy of Budaeus's *Commentarii Linguae Graecae* is reproduced by permission of the Master and Fellows of St John's College, Cambridge (photograph by author).

2. See John Spottiswoode, *History of the Church of Scotland* (London: Flesher, 1655), 465.

3. *The Men behind the King James Version* (1959; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977), 17.

4. See Anthony Walker's life of Bois, reprinted in Ward S. Allen, *Translating for King James: Notes Made by a Translator of King James's Bible* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1969), 127–52; quotation from 146.

5. "The Translators to the Reader," quoting Jerome, in *The New Cambridge Paragraph Bible* (ed. David Norton; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), xxxi.

6. Thomas Fuller, *The History of the Worthies of England* (London: London: Grismond, Leybourne, and Godbid, 1662), 3:61.

7. *The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer* (1532–1533; vol. 8.2 of *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More* [ed. Louis A. Schuster et al.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973]), 725, referring to Tyndale's *Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue* (1531; ed. Henry Walter [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1850]), 49.

8. "Nunquam magis propitio utor genio meo, quam cum literarum studiis totus incumbo. In literis quidem parum possum: extra literas tamen nihil sum: extra literas quid nisi animal sum omnium vilissimum? Vade quo te invitat genius" (diary, 1627–1639, Cambridge University Library MS Add 3856), fol. 165r.

9. Allen, *Translating for King James*, 63.

10. Author's translation of lines 2–10 of the sample page from Budaeus (fig. 1).

11. John Strype, *The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker* (London: Wyat, 1711), appendix 85, p. 139.

12. "Prologue," New Testament (Cologne: Quentell, 1525), fol. Aiir.

13. *Bible*, xxxi.

14. David Daniell sees the KJV's work as sometimes overliteral to the point of incomprehensibility, and gives a number of examples of its inferiority to Tyndale in terms of clarity and English rhythm; see, e.g., *William Tyndale: A Biography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 2, 302, 352; and *The Bible in English* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 431.

15. His 1525 and 1526 Testaments had "and it was overthrown" rather than "and it fell."

16. See my *History of the Bible as Literature*, 1:97–98.

17. "On Translating the Bible into Modern English," *Essays and Studies*, new series, 23 (1970): 6–7.

18. John Husbands, *A Miscellany of Poems* (Oxford: Lichfield, 1731), fol. d4v.

19. *Table Talk* (London: Smith, 1689), 3.

20. *Confutation*, 187.

21. *A Proposal for Correcting, Improving and Ascertaining the English Tongue* (2nd ed.; London: Tooke, 1712), 32.

22. *Troilus and Cressida* (London: Swall & Tonson, 1679), fol. A4v.

23. *New Cambridge Paragraph Bible*, xxxiv.

24. See James L. Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 23, etc.

Part 1
The King James Version in Its Historical Context

The King James Bible in Early Modern Political Context

Lori Anne Ferrell

"The Bible only," the English churchman William Chillingworth wrote in 1638, "is the religion of Protestants." Whether it was also the religion of England's Protestant church is the question that prompts this essay. It is a question rarely asked. A number of recent books, shrewdly timed to take advantage of the 400th anniversary of the so-called King James Bible, have focused our attention onto that enterprise of 1611 and the processes, political and scholarly, that allowed other early modern Bibles to be rendered into English. We are now well educated in the Bible's literary influence, reception, and modes of translation. Bibliographic, print-historical, and materialist studies of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Bible abound. Fueled by recent, ambitious, text-editing projects, Scripture as filtered through the medium of early modern preaching has been a subject of intense scholarly interest since the 1990s. We who work in the area of early modern English religion, indeed, do almost nothing *but* investigate the social consequences and cultural impact of the Word: on worship and doctrine; on education, rhetoric, poetry, and politics; on post-Reformation England's nascent Protestantism and its lingering Catholicism. We rarely take, however, a simple look at the Church of England's formally articulated attitudes toward the Bible.

Thus this short essay tracks the English Church's official position on Scripture as articulated in the reigns of Elizabeth I (1558–1603), James I (1603–1625), and, very briefly, Charles I (executed in 1649 by his parliament, after seven years of civil war conducted largely for reasons of religion). This will show that the Church of England's statements about Scripture shifted markedly between the Protestant Settlement of 1559 and the revolutionary Long Parliament of 1640: revealing, I will argue, an official

church increasingly intent upon downplaying or even countering the reliance on the *sola scriptura* principle that had animated its early reformation. This, in the end, created subjects so alarmed by a perceived decline in reformed principles that they became politically radicalized.

My claim is based on a single and singular source: the Acts and Injunctions promulgated by a legislatively minded church increasingly intent between the 1560s and 1630s to keep its local parishes under effective control by means of episcopal visitation and oversight. Diocesan and parish visitation was "the linchpin of effective ecclesiastical government" in an English episcopal polity, something that did not change with the Reformation but that did, arguably, make the changes demanded by full-scale protestantization easier to implement and oversee.[1] Here the long arm of church law reached all the way to parish pews, altars, and churchyards. All bishops were required to visit their sees within eighteen months of translation or elevation by the monarch. After that, they were supposed to visit their region every three years (and amazingly, many did; even archbishops visited all the dioceses in their provinces as soon as possible after consecration and then visited individual dioceses when a see was vacated). The questions these august individuals planned to ask—about how the church was run, what it owned, and the spiritual condition and habits of its personnel and laity—were precirculated to the local churchwardens, who were charged with providing answers.

By the beginning of the seventeenth century these articles were routinely printed so churchwardens could easily provision themselves with pretest study guides, thereby bequeathing historians of the Church of England a veritable treasure trove of illuminating evidence—of the generalized values of the church; of the material costs of reformation; of the degree to which any church, whether parish or cathedral, was willing to comply with them. It is clear these visits were significant. Visitation Articles are some of the most heavily hand-annotated of any early modern printed pages in the research library—proof of their having been read, and carefully. This was for good reason. Churchwardens had much to answer for in a perilously transitional age. The Reformation made itself first known at the parish level by changes in church fabric and the purchase of new books, the Bible among these. A transitionally literate laity surely noticed the books before they could spell out the words within.

The archives preserve only a few, mostly reissued, Injunctions and Articles in printed form for Elizabeth's reign. But many printed versions of the Jacobean and Caroline Articles (most of these variations on a theme

set, as we shall see, by Richard Bancroft's Articles for his diocese of London in the late sixteenth century) are extant in seventeenth-century copies. With these pamphlets we can trace an ecclesiastical message from the top down that is fairly clean and straightforward. This essay, then, is about the language of official policy—not on the manner or efficacy of its enforcement, or on lay and clerical response to that policy. This is not to claim that the official voice of rule and enforcement is the only voice that matters in history. By its very nature, a state church must allow for latitude—a kind of winking at minor or isolated infractions of the regulation—that make its status as a national church possible. The English people, the English clergy, even the English episcopate never responded to the canons of the English Church in a uniform way. Nonetheless, if we track the church's official voice across three reigns, we can discern a trajectory, an unmistakable narrative of change over time—as the church's stated attitude toward the English Bible moved from promotion, to increasing suspicion, to select disavowal. This trend, I will suggest, led the more godly minded of English laypeople increasingly to view their Bibles as personal rather than corporate scripts—a development that would eventually become the characteristic aspect of the Bible's reception and dissemination in America.

What was the English Church's policy on the Bible and on Bible reading? In considering English religion at the level of statute, and where holy writ is concerned, we are most familiar with the shifting governmental desires of Henry VIII (1509–1547), who after much vacillation finally ensured that humanist translating energy would be channeled into the creation of an official, public version of Scripture, one that, by royal injunction, was required to be purchased by all churches. Henry came to repent of his enlightenment and later explicitly restricted the bounds of lay reading. But Bible production increased markedly under the progressive regent governments of Edward VI (1547–1552); given the early death of the evangelically Protestant boy king, however, this had limited cultural impact. Although the Catholic government of Mary I (1552–1558) did not succeed in eradicating the vernacular Bible, no English Bibles—certainly no official or legal ones—were printed in her reign. In addition, given that Mary's government burned at the stake people it suspected of printing or promulgating the now-illegal English Scriptures, it surely did not encourage the practice.[2]

Elizabeth's Visitation Articles and the Injunctions of 1559 from which they derived offer, then, a piercing look into what it took to restore a Protestant church that officially presented itself as diminished and badly

traumatized by its recent past. At first, her government sounds far more concerned with getting the Bible back into the churches than it is with restoring the liturgy—something that makes sense when we consider just how radical most of her ecclesiastical establishment, returning from an enforced exile on the Continent during Mary's reign, had to be. The Church of England's obsession with its liturgical traditions—exemplified in a Book of Common Prayer that was, in effect, a rewriting of England's traditional Catholic Mass—was not much in evidence in 1558–1559. Its obsession with the Bible was.

In the history of the English Reformation we find, time and again, that degrees of religious radicalism are proportionally related to the extent to which people privileged Scripture reading over liturgical practice. To read the official language of the church at the very beginning of Elizabeth's reign is to realize that, at this time, Protestant martyrdom was not only searingly recent but also indelibly associated with the struggle for a vernacular Bible: William Tyndale and many others had died for this cause, and even those who went to the flames for reasons other than translating had arrived at their fatal doctrinal positions after reading the translated Bible.

This singed tone can be discerned in items 46 and 49 of the *Articles to be inquired of in the visitation of the church*, first printed in 1559, which ring an extraordinary variation on any bureaucratic church's ongoing concerns with inventory. Elizabethan bishops were required to ask of parish churchwardens the following: "Item, what books of holy Scripture you have delivered to be burned, or otherwise destroyed, and to whom you have delivered the same";[3] and, "Item, how many persons for religion have died by fire, famine, or otherwise, or have been imprisoned for the same."[4] This sober checklist reminds us that, under the previous regime, many churches in England were depleted of two essential and intimately related resources: their Bibles and their people.

Bibles were more easily procured and reinstated in the Church of England than martyrs. Within three months of an initial visitation and (of course) at parish expense, "one book of the whole Bible of the largest volume in English" was to be reinstalled in the church. By the end of the year, Erasmus's paraphrases were also to be purchased, and both books were to be set up in a central location where parishioners could consult the Scriptures at any time except during the service. The 1559 Injunctions specifically commanded clergy, and at great length, to "discourage no man from the reading of any part of the Bible either in Latin or in English,

but … rather exhort every person to read the same," and they went on to endorse the Scriptures as "the very lively word of God, and the especial food of Man's soul, which all Christian persons are bound to embrace, believe, and follow if they look to be saved, [and] whereby they may the better know their duties to God, to their Sovereign Lady the Queen, and [to] their neighbor."[5]

For their part, parishioners of the progressively Protestant sort—the kind we would be comfortable calling "Puritans" in a few years—were to be reminded that not all clergy currently beneficed in the Church of England had instantly become Bible enthusiasts when Elizabeth came to power and asserted her authority over the church. These more "godly" laypeople were enjoined to think charitably rather than censoriously about priests who "of long time favoured fond fantasies rather than God's truth."[6] Notwithstanding, churchwardens were to be asked whether their parish minister was a "letter" (i.e., hinderer) of Bible reading by others—in private or in church—or a hinderer of "sincere" preaching of biblical texts; they were also urged to report any clergyman who spent his time off idling rather than learning his chapters and verses. These admonitions on both sides are early warning systems. The Bible often brought not peace but a sword to the uneasily reforming parish churches of late Elizabethan England, torn as they were between traditional practices of liturgy and Latin prayers and new demands that the people be edified with Scripture and preaching in their own tongue.

For now, though, Elizabethan "Parsons, Vicars, and Ministers of Churches" were commanded to "painfully be occupied in Scripture," to memorize Bible passages in English so as to have the right words at the tips of their tongues when parishioners sought spiritual counsel and comfort. They were therefore explicitly commanded to undertake active reading: to purchase for their own private use those copies of the New Testament in Latin and English and to work through them, comparing them and taking notes.[7]

This explicitly articulated privileging of the Word was the foundation on which the Elizabethan church was first reconstructed. The *Book of Certaine Canons*, which covered the specific responsibilities of every member of an episcopal polity from archbishops on down and was published by royal decree in 1571, opened: "All Bishops shall diligently teach the Gospel. … principally they shall exhort their people to the reading, and hearing, of the holy scriptures." Bishops were to ordain only those "who hath been well exercised in the holy scriptures." By this time, every

bishop was expected to own both a Bible and a Foxe's Book of Martyrs and place them "either in the hall, or in the great chamber that they may serve to the use of their servants and to strangers." Deans of Cathedral churches were ordered also to have "the very same books we spoke of last … in such convenient place that the vicars and petty canons, and other ministers of the church, as also strangers and foreigners can easily come unto them and read thereon." All deans, cathedral residents, and archdeacons were to "buy the same books every one for his own family and … lay them in some place either in the hall or the chamber." Moving these concerns with biblical teaching out from the private chamber to the visible congregation, the canons then enjoined all licensed ministers not only to preach "the word of God" but also to ascertain that any statutes of the church "not contrary to the word of God" were also to be preached diligently.[8]

Just how diligently was spelled out in further injunctions and articles. Preachers were to "take heed, that they teach nothing in their preaching, which they would have the people to believe, but that which is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old Testament or the New." They were to teach that the "articles of the Christian religion agreed upon by the Bishops in … convocation [and commanded by the queen were] undoubtedly gathered out of the holy books of the Old and New Testament and in all points agree with the heavenly doctrine contained in them … also [that] the Book of Common Prayer contains nothing repugnant to the same."[9] This is reformation by Scripture, the Bible as the religion of Protestants. These injunctions and national articles, so advocatory on the Bible and on Bible reading, both lay and clerical, both private and public, appeared in at least five editions between 1559 and 1600 without change, while the governmental attitude on further reform on the model set by the Calvinist churches on the Continent, and the outspoken people who hotly clamored for it, was cooling to lukewarm. And so, ironically, the long reign that finally ensured England's Protestantism after a century of Tudor confessional vacillation also created the conditions that spelled the end of the doctrine of *sola scriptura*—a church but "halfly reformed"; the retention of traditional worship practices and church government leading to the rise of indignant and demanding parishioners called "Puritans" within this same church.[10]

Or, perhaps better said, it allowed the initial, generative understanding of that doctrine to pass away. For first- and second-generation Protestant reformers, *sola scriptura* seems to have carried a capacious and active meaning: that the Bible was not merely sufficient to the simple doctrine of salvation by faith, which would establish the church invis-

ible, but was also the literal standard against which the visible church, its doctrines and practices, was to be judged. Here recall the words of the injunction that described the Bible as a book all Christians were to "embrace, believe, and follow if they look to be saved," but also that "they may the better know their duties to God, Queen, and [to] their neighbor," these last three, when compounded, making a nicely succinct definition of a national church.

The relatively late date (1600) of the final Elizabethan reissue of the Articles thus makes the near disappearance of explicit Bible policy at the beginning of the reign of James I all the more striking. Indeed, in the Jacobean Articles the Bible appears as little more than another furnishing: to be procured and purchased and inventoried by churchwardens. The proactive tone of the 1559 Injunctions and the 1571 Canons, their many stated provisions for biblical reading and displaying and instruction, their plethora of approving references to Holy Scripture, are hardly to be found in the Canons of 1604.

Silence can, admittedly, be a misleading evidence of decline. And perhaps after fifty years of Protestantism in England, with the secure establishment of the Church of England under the supreme headship of the monarch by 1603, we could simply say that the passionate advocacy and defense of the Bible was no longer necessary and was assumed. But instead let us recall that the turn of the century—and with it the end of the Tudors, and with that the accession of their Stuart cousins to the throne—was a particularly unstable time in early modern England, especially in the realm of religion. And let us also recall who scripted those 1604 canons: Richard Bancroft, bishop of London, the widely styled "hammer of the Puritans," and the author of a set of Visitation Articles for London in 1598 that, in their range and comprehensiveness, set the template *for* and, arguably, the tone *of* policy in the Church of England until that church was dismantled, violently, in the 1640s.

A reading of 1604 in the light of 1598 and against 1559 thus yields the following suggestive if not definitive insights: in many injunctions wherein we would have seen the word *Bible* in 1559, we now find the word *preaching*. And when we now find the word *preaching* it is not always in tones of unalloyed approval. The slackening of talk about the Scriptures seems taken up with talk about the liturgy. It can indeed sometimes appear that the Prayer Book became, not simply the essential liturgical blueprint it had been since its reinstatement in 1558, but instead the Bible's chief competitor—and one that required a kind of handicapping to ensure it could

compete with populist and instructive Bibles like the Geneva Bible (first imported into England in 1560).

Take, for example, the 57th canon of 1604, titled *The Sacraments not to be refused at the hands of unpreaching Ministers:* "forasmuch as the doctrine both of Baptism and of the Lords Supper is so sufficiently set down in the Book of Common Prayer … as nothing can be added to it that is material and necessary, we do require and charge every such person seduced as aforesaid to reform … their wilfulness and submit to the order of the Church."[11] There is no real equivalent to this in the 1559 Injunctions. The authoritative text has, arguably, shifted; sacramental doctrine is to be judged relative to its articulation in the Book of Common Prayer, not Scripture. The 1559 command that only statutes "not contrary to the word of God" could be preached had been put into busy defensive service in Elizabeth's reign, and we see here the effect such service had on concepts of Scripture versus liturgy. Like bishops, like the ring in marriage, like any ceremony that was no longer adjudged sacrament—like making the sign of the cross in baptism, for example—the liturgy had to be protected under what we might call the "not contrary" clause, which expanded the range and reach of adiaphora in a way that often goes unnoticed. As the category of things indifferent expanded and contracted under the pressure of religious debates over the official apparatus of the church, the Prayer Book itself lost interpretive elasticity. The importance of *sola scriptura* dwindled; the doctrine of what we might call *sola liturgia* was to take over its job description.

This realization might prompt us to pay attention for the first time to a throwaway line at the Hampton Court conference of 1604. On day two of the conference, John Reynolds, who headed the delegation of moderates assigned to present the godly cause for reform to the king and his bishops, brought that case compiled under four heads: (1) "that the doctrine of the Church might be preserved in purity *according to God's Word*"; (2) "that good pastors be planted in the Church *to preach the same* [i.e., God's Word]"; (3) "that the Church's government be sincerely administered *according to God's Word*"; and, (4) "that the Book of Common Prayer *might be better fitted to more increase of piety*." Alas for Reynolds, Richard Bancroft—who not only loathed Puritan petitioners but also loathed even more any man who *did not* loathe Puritan petitioners—was present. The request appears to have amused both him and the king. Laughingly, James remarked that, if everything the Puritans wanted better explained in the liturgy were to be added to the liturgy, that the Prayer Book would "*swell*

into a volume as big as the Bible, and confound the reader." We all know what happened next: Reynolds shifted gears and asked for something that, to some observers (both then and now) was unexpected but should have been entirely uncontroversial: a new translation of the Bible. The king readily agreed. And in so doing, he dealt the deathblow to conforming Puritanism in the Church of England.[12]

It is clear that the king and others (including the infamous chronicler of this exchange, the anti-Puritan William Barlow) thought Reynolds was advocating that the Geneva Bible that he—and many people, some far more conservative than he—preferred serve as the model for England's next state Bible. For all its widespread popularity, the Geneva was a book without official status in the Church of England, a Bible thus designed for private reading—if by "private" we do not mean "individual" but simply "not commanded to be read in the churches during worship." The blowback at Hampton Court, then, may well have had everything to do with the difference between Bibles for private use and Bibles for public use—more, arguably, than it did about the Calvinism in its marginal notes. Both the king and the Puritans wanted a new public Bible for the Church of England; James, however, did not want that Bible to be one that had been designed along private lines.

In historical hindsight the decision at Hampton Court to commission the 1611 or "King James" Bible signaled the end of a near-century of biblically oriented reform in the Church of England. In the very moment James I acceded to the wishes of his Puritan loyalists, the bedrock assumption of their reforming hopes—that the principle of *sola scriptura* did not simply mean the Bible was sufficient to salvation but that this sufficiency also extended to form a measuring rod and chief cornerstone for the church itself—was effectively doomed. With its Latinate cadences and lack of explanatory marginal notes, the 1611 Bible, a true masterpiece of English prose, is not a study Bible but a Bible aimed at supporting liturgical worship. It is the companion piece to the Church of England's Book of Common Prayer, and has remained so ever since.

By the 1630s, then, we see William Laud, in his own Visitation Articles for London, asking the following: "Whether have any affirmed, preached, or taught, that the form of making and consecrating Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, or anything therein contained, *is repugnant, or not agreeable to the word of God?* Or that the government of the Church by Archbishops, Bishops, or others that bear any Office therein, *is Antichristian, or not agreeable to the word of God?*"[13] Here the Bible has become the church's

problem: the text that, studied privately, could be used to challenge the governmentally sanctioned practices of the Church of England.

Returning to the Elizabethan official instructions regarding the Bible we find, then, that the later-sixteenth-century church either felt it unnecessary or perhaps had no particular opinion yet on whether it had to distinguish between types of reading. The early Elizabethan directives on the Bible were promiscuous: they speak of public and private reading, lay and clergy, in halls in houses and on stands in churches and from the reading desk, all mixed together. The Hampton Court conference did not signal the establishment of a single Bible in English; it established two ways of Bible reading: public and private. One would best flourish in a national church, bounded, and organized, and channeled through the liturgy. This is the Bible we should call, simply, King James's Version. King James's other Bible would need to come westward, across an ocean and across a continent, to thrive in America, where private reading established a multitude of visible denominations, each claiming public status for their singular and eccentric takes on Holy Writ. This is what happens when a public Bible gets privatized.

Notes

1. Drawn from Kenneth Fincham's invaluable *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church* (2 vols.; Church of England Record Society 1 and 5; Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 1994–1998).

2. This quick narrative account is drawn from my recent work: Lori Anne Ferrell, *The Bible and the People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), esp. ch. 3, "The Politics of Translation: The Bible in English, *c.* 1500–1700," 56–94, passim.

3. *Articles to Be Enquired of in the Visitation of the Church* (London: Robert Barker, 1600), sig. Bi v–sig. Biir: Item 46. In the margin is the simple word "Books."

4. *Articles:* sig. Biir: Item 49. In this margin we find simply, "How many burnt."

5. *Articles:* sig. A3r-v: Item 6.

6. *Articles:* sig. A3r-v: Item 6.

7. *Articles of 1559*: sig. Aii v: Item 6 (in the margin: "reading the scripture"); and Aivr: Item 25 (in the margin: "Letter of the word or preaching."

8. *A Booke of Certaine Canons, Concernyng Some Parte of the Discipline of the Church of England …* (London: Daye, 1571), sig. Aiir–Aiiiir. This abbreviated set of canons simply outlined the duties for each level of church governmental officer from archbishops to patrons.

9. *Certaine Canons*, sig. Ciiiir.

10. Patrick Collinson was the first to identify "Puritanism" as a nonsectarian phenomenon within the Church of England—a kind of "leaven in the loaf"—in 1967,

and this model transformed and continues to inform all treatments of early modern English Protestantism: *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London: Cape, 1967); the "leaven" remark comes from his Ford Lectures of 1979 at the University of Oxford, later published as *The Religion of Protestants: The Church in English Society, 1559–1625* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982).

11. *Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical, Treated upon by the Bishop of London* (London: Robert Barker, 1604), K4v.

12. The account is taken from Bishop William Barlow, *The Summe and Substance of the Conference Which, It Pleased His Excellent Maiestie to Have with the Lords Bishops, and Other of His Cleargie, (at Which the Most of the Lordes of the Councell Were Present) in His Maiesties Privie-Chamber, at Hampton Court. Ianuary 14. 1604. Contracted by William Barlovv* (London: Valentine Simmes, 1605).

13. *Articles to Be Enquired of within the Dioceses of London, in the Second Triennial Visitation of the Right Honorable, and Right reverend Father in God WILLIAM [Laud] Lord Bishop of London Holden in the Yeer of our Lord God, 1631* (Oxford: William Turner, 1631), B4r.

The KJV and the Rapid Growth of English in the Elizabethan-Jacobean Era

Seth Lerer

The period from 1500 to 1650 saw the largest documented increase in the English vocabulary since the Norman Conquest.[1] It has been estimated that about 70 percent of our current, working lexicon comes from words borrowed from outside the language, and the overwhelming bulk of these words entered learned and common parlance in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Such words, too, were not simply lifted wholesale from other tongues. They were coined out of the raw material of classical example: inkhorn terms, aureate diction, denotations for scientific and technical material—all of these came to increase the vocabulary of the language. The English language was as much a landscape to be conquered and explored as any colony's, and dictionaries of the age made explicit this link between vision and vocabulary. The title of Edward Phillips's 1658 dictionary was *The New World of Words*, a volume that affirmed not only the voracity of English but the imperial aspirations of England. As Phillips put it in his preface, "There are not many nations in Europe, some of whose words we have not made bold with." There was a politics to this prolixity. Forty years before Phillips, Joseph Bullokar could note, in the preface to his *Expositor* (1616), "it is familiar among best writers to usurp strange words." The arts of language are the arts of power.[2]

What place does the King James Bible, or the Authorized Version, play in this new world of words? Traditional accounts of English linguistic history place the King James Version at the nexus of the innovative and the archaic.[3] Much of its vernacular, as we well know, was cobbled together out of earlier translations, Tyndale and Coverdale in particular, and by the early seventeenth century it was already perceived as old-fashioned. Certain grammatical uses, in particular the *-th* suffix for the third

person singular verb and the grammatical gendering of particular nouns (for example, in the phrase, "if the salt have lost his savour," Matt 5:13), were perceived by contemporaries as unrepresentative of everyday spoken usage. It is also important to see how the perceptions of biblical archaism changed over time. By the middle of the eighteenth century, scholars and divines had come to find the language of the AV old and "low." Anthony Purver's "Quaker's Bible" of 1764 concluded with a long list of obsolete terms from the KJV. And yet, a century or so later, many of these words were brought back into use by literary and political writers, seeking the patina of biblical authority. For example, among the words listed by Purver as archaic in the mid-eighteenth century, the following were brought back into currency in the mid-nineteenth: *avenge, eschewed*, *laden*, *ponder*, *unwittingly*, and *warfare*.[4]

These perceptions were only part of the early reaction to the KJV. Hugh Broughton famously considered it "ill done," and John Selden (one of the most accomplished Hebraists of the Jacobean period), while he considered its translation excellent at the literal level, objected to the unidiomatic quality of its style: it rendered the Bible's language, he said, "into English words rather than into English phrases." It is also true that the KJV did not immediately supersede other English Bibles. The Geneva Bible (originally printed in 1560) remained popular, especially among the Puritans, and was reprinted until 1644. It was not until the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 that the KJV was effectively asserted as *the* Bible. Further, while the KJV did inform the texture of John Milton's poetry and John Bunyan's prose by the end of the seventeenth century (and, importantly, the idioms of their contemporary, American poet Anne Bradstreet), it is not until the nineteenth that what David Norton has called "AVolatry" began to shape the English-speaking world's worship of this text.[5]

The study of the KJV in the context of the changing English of its origins and immediate reception is, therefore, challenged by these questions of innovation and archaism, grammar and vocabulary, style and substance. What I would like to offer today is a point of entry into understanding how the KJV interacted with the English of its time.

At the start, it is important to make some distinctions. Unlike Shakespeare, Marlowe, or Milton, the men charged with the translation of the AV were not self-conscious innovators in vernacular expression, nor did they see their task as fundamentally concerned with augmenting or enhancing the English lexicon. By charge, age, and temperament, they were conserva-

tive in usage. The sheer vocabulary of the AV is limited, and many of its most famous expressions, in fact, trace back to earlier English translations. Unlike Shakespeare, who is credited with coining something like six thousand words (a number challenged by professional and popular philologists alike, however), the AV bequeathed to modern colloquial English no more than—in David Crystal's calculation—257 expressions. These range from evocative commonplaces such as "be fruitful and multiply," to figurations such as "fly in the ointment," to metaphorical locales ("land of Nod") and objects ("apple of his eye"). And yet, as Crystal details, very few of these expressions are absolutely original with the King James translators. All but eighteen of Crystal's list appear in at least one earlier version of the English Bible, and over a score of these kinds of expressions appear in every English version, from Wycliffe on.[6]

Where the AV has had its impact, and where I think it participates most fully in the linguistic changes of its own time, is therefore not in the rise of vocabulary but in the codification of idiom. The AV's impact, in part, lay in its translators' attempts to render the idiomatic expressions in the Hebrew. Famous phrases such as the following mutated Hebrew expressions entered into vernacular English for the first time: lick the dust, sour grapes, pride goes before a fall, put words in his mouth, a man after his own heart, a fly in the ointment. Modern scholars have recognized that the AV's translators hewed more closely to Hebrew word order in the Old Testament than earlier translators had done, and it was most likely this habit that provoked John Selden's criticism about "English words rather than English phrases." For, as he went on, "The Hebraisms are kept and the phrase of that language is kept."[7]

But more than merely passing on Hebrew idioms, the AV participated in a larger set of linguistic changes in early modern English that affect usage and semantics. Spoken and written English during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was becoming not only richer with words but richer with idioms, and it is, I believe, this rise in idiomatic expression that characterizes the vernacular imagination of the period. Such idioms may be made up of ordinary or familiar words. But they transcend that familiarity by repositioning these words in new figurative environments. They enable expressions to be taken out of local context and applied anywhere. This creation of self-contained idiomatic expressions was Shakespeare's gift as well (and to some extent Milton's). And while it does not necessarily rely on increasing the raw lexical count of a language, it does rely on the increase in *polysemy* characteristic of the time.

As historical linguists have long noted, the period from 1500 to 1700 saw, in addition to an increase in vocabulary, an increase in the potential semantic fields of already existing words. Words such as "uncouth" or "silly" that originally bore specific, limited meanings in Old and Middle English ("unknown" and "blessed," respectively) came to connote broad patterns of social behavior. Words drawn from technical disciplines also began to take on figurative connotations. Words from commerce could apply to social life; words from physical experience could refer to emotional conditions. This process, known as extension in lexis, may lead to confusion, but it enables the imagination. "Brazen" in Old and Middle English meant "made of brass," and while it is used in this way in the AV (2 Kgs 18:4; Jer 15:20), Shakespeare was using it to mean "impudent." To "bristle" in the fifteenth century meant to stand up stiffly; in Shakespeare, it means to "become indignant." To "broil" for Chaucer meant to burn, but Shakespeare used it to mean "get angry."[8]

In this linguistic environment, meaning itself becomes fruitfully unstable. It makes possible pun and wordplay, creative ambiguity, and extended metaphorics. It makes possible the vertiginous ambivalences of Shakespeare's Sonnets as well as the metaphysical conceits of Donne's lyrics. Together with the cultural perception of rising vocabulary, it contributes, in particular, to a sense that language can dislocate the individual from the world, that the vernacular can be unstable, and that in that instability it can be either exciting or threatening. It is precisely, then, this sense of the vernacular as increasingly unstable that provokes the rise of the English dictionary. Not only was the dictionary designed to introduce the reader to new words; it was designed to codify usage, to find a path through the welter of copiousness that was characteristic of the rhetorical and literary uses of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Not everyone welcomed this copiousness. Perhaps the best known and most brilliantly curmudgeonly of early-seventeenth-century writers on language was Alexander Gil (1564–1635), headmaster of St. Paul's School and the teacher of John Milton.[9] Gil's *Logonomia Anglica* appeared in 1619, and it was designed (among other things) to record the best forms of educated speech (in a quirky and original "phonetic alphabet" conjured up by Gil himself), as well as to reflect on the changing vocabulary of the vernacular. Arguing that, from Chaucer's time on, English had become infested with Latin and French words, Gil writes:

> Ita quotidie fera vocum monstra cicurat; horridasque, & male sonantes, nidique infausti picas, & cicumas nostra verba conari docet. Sic hodie fere ex iis Anglis sumus, qui Anglice non loquuntur, ab Anglicis auribus non intelliguntur. Nec satis habemus spurium hunc foetum suscepisse, foedum aluisse; sed legitimum etiam, origine nostrum, vultu gratum, & a maioribus agnitum, pepulisse.
>
> [So daily wild beasts of words are tamed, and horrid evil-sounding magpies and owls of unpropitious birth are taught to hazard our words. Thus today we are, for the most part, Englishmen not speaking English and not understood by English ears. Nor are we satisfied with having begotten this illegitimate progeny, nourished this monster, but we have exiled that which was legitimate.]

Gil evokes a language of chaos, as if the Eden of a pre-Chaucerian language had led to an untamed forest. His idioms show us a fallen world: not just a Babel, but a Pandemonium of tongues. The imagery of the monstrous and the illegitimate, the exile and the unpropitious, evokes the casting out from Eden, the story of Ishmael, and the story of Babel itself.

Milton himself, I believe, recalled the phrasings of his old teacher when he imagines the horrid illegitimate progeny of Satan, Sin, and Death, in book 2 of *Paradise Lost* ("at last this odious offspring whom thou seest"), and then the sound:

> At length a universal hubbub wild
> Of stunning sounds and voices all confus'd
> Born through the hollow dark assaults his ear
> With loudest vehemence. (2.951–954)[10]

And then, when the personification of Night itself speaks to Satan at this moment, he recalls how the angels, tossed from heaven, fled,

> With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
> Confusion worse confounded. (2.995–996)

The trajectory from Gil to Milton traces, I am suggesting here, a view of language not as copious, expansive, brilliant, and imaginative, but as threatening, confused, confounding, and crazed. It is one view of the vernacular in an age of rapid change, and it resonates with the verbal particu-

lars of how the King James translators approached a comparable moment in the Bible.

> 1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. 2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. 3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. 4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. 5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. 6 And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they began to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. 7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. 8 So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. 9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth; and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth. (Gen 11:1–9 KJV)

Compare this version with the translation from Miles Coverdale's 1534 Old Testament:

> Moreover all the world had one tongue and language. Now as they wente towarde the East, they founde a playne in ye londe of Synear, & there they dwelt, & saide one to another: Come on, let vs make brick & burne it. And they toke brick for stone & slyme for morter, And sayde: Come, let vs buylde a cite & a tower, whose toppe may reache vnto heaven, ye we may make vs a name, afore we be scattered abrode in all londes. Then came ye Lorde down to se ye cite & tower, yt ye children of men had buylded. And ye lorde saide: Beholde, the people is one & haue one maner of language among them all, & this have they begonne to do & wil not leaue of from all yt they haue purposed to do. Come on, let vs go downe & confounde their tongue even there, yt one vnderstonde not what another saiethy. Thus ye lorde scattered them from thence in all londes, so yat they left of to buylde the cite. Therefore it is called Babell, because the Lorde confounded there the language of all the worlde, and from thence scattered them abroade into all londes.

The differences are striking. In the KJV the Lord "scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth"—a phrase that echoes with the

opening of Genesis and creation itself ("and darkness was upon the face of the deep"). By using this phrasing that makes the reader recall the opening the Bible itself, the KJV makes the "fall" into language from Babel a kind of anticreation: a powerful riposte to the unification of all creation under God's aegis. It is the idiom, too, of the Vulgate: "et inde dispersit eos Dominus super faciem cunctarum regionum."

But the similarities are equally remarkable. In both these versions, indeed in all versions of the passage from Wycliffe on, the key word in this story is "confound." It is the key term in the Vulgate as well: "Venite igitur, descendamus, et confundamus ibi linguam eorum, ut non audiat unusquisque vocem proximi sui." The word *confound* so clearly stuck in the translators' ears that when the opportunity arises later in the passage to deploy it, the translators do so again. "The LORD did there confound the language of all the earth" (v. 9). In the Vulgate, the word is not *confound* but *confuse*: "quia ibi confusum est labium universae terrae." In Coverdale, as in King James, the word is *confound*.

Look up the word *confound* in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) and you may well be confounded. Definition 5 is "to throw things into confusion or disorder." Here it is a synonym for *confuse*. Its earliest usage, according to the *OED*, is 1553, and the second recorded usage is this very passage from the KJV ("Let us go down and there confound their language"). The *OED* does not recognize the usage as predating these appearances, most strikingly, from Coverdale.

Now, there are many things that could be said about this lexicography, not the least of which is the way in which the *OED* deliberately privileges the KJV for linguistic innovation even when that version is not the linguistic innovator (this is a truism of the *OED* and its Victorian editors, practitioners of "AVolatry" if ever there were any). But what can also be said is that a close look at the language of the KJV confounds not only the Victorian lexicographer but the Jacobean translator. In the preface to the AV, the translators established a principle of using a wide choice of English words and phrases to render Hebrew and Greek. They presented themselves explicitly as not trying to build a regularized, repeated vocabulary, but rather as responding to the original terms. Thus they write in their preface: "We have not tied ourselves to an uniformity of phrasing or an identity of words. … But that we should express the same notion in the same particular word … we thought to savour more of curiosity than wisdom."

And yet, I would argue, this is precisely what they do not do in their version of the story of Babel. The word *confound* becomes a touchstone

of linguistic confusion: a way of responding not just to the drama of this particular, biblical scene but to the tensions of linguistic debate in the early seventeenth century. The KJV sustains Coverdale's key word *confound* because it is part of an earlier sixteenth-century idiom and, in the process, makes the language seem archaic. By the early seventeenth century, the concept was being replaced by the word *confuse* (*OED* cites for *confuse* definition 3, the first use in 1630). But the King James translators go one step further. They clearly hang on to the word *confound* when later, at the scene of Pentecost, they describe the tongues of flame and the language there: "Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language" (Acts 2:6).

This scene is, if you like, the anti-Babel moment in the Bible: a scene of linguistic comprehension defined by language difference, rather than a scene of linguistic confusion. Here the KJV uses the word *confounded*, in spite of the fact that the Vulgate, Wycliffe, Tyndale, and Coverdale use the word *astonished*. In Coverdale's phrasing: "And whan this voice came to passe, the multitude came together, and were astonyed."

I think that what is happening here is that the translators of the AV use the word *confounded* to evoke the earlier idiom of the scene of Babel. My larger point would be that in passages such as this, the translators establish (in spite of their preface's claim) a self-consciousness about the repeated and consistent use of key vocabulary terms in order to bring passages together in the reader's mind: it makes possible a greater figural density to the Bible than the earlier translations do. Thus returning to the idioms of the Vulgate in the Babel scene (in spite of Coverdale) recalls the opening of Genesis and creation. Returning to the idioms of the Babel scene in Acts (in spite of everyone) brings the figurality full circle.

But there is one more point I wish to make. If the choice of the word *confound* or *confounded* in these passages represents some level of verbal self-consciousness, it represents as well a level of rhetorical power. As I have mentioned, the word *confound* was losing ground in the early seventeenth century to the word *confuse*, especially in contexts describing linguistic variety, noise, and strange utterances. Milton, by the 1660s, uses both in that moment in book 2 of *Paradise Lost*, as if to bridge the generational linguistic divide of his time. But I think that at least a brief and parting look at the writings of an earlier English divine can illuminate this linguistic moment. If there was any single man who may be thought of as a presiding aegis among the collaborative companies of the AV, it may well

be Lancelot Andrewes, dean of Westminster Abbey and head of the First Westminster Company of translators. Much has been said about his role in the formation of the King James Bible, and I would suggest, in closing, that his idiomatic impress can be seen at the local level of this seemingly small matter.[11]

Throughout his many sermons preached during the last years of the sixteenth century and the first decades of the seventeenth century, Andrewes addresses the ways in which the challenges of social conflict or the miracles of the divine leave ordinary people, in a word, confounded. In his brilliant Gunpowder Plot Sermon of 1606, he reflects on the "open rebellion" of the plotters, "so that God cast their owne power in their faces." He goes on: "Cloathed with their owne shame, and even covered with their owne confusion; that they fall as fast as they rise; are still confounded." Such phrasings recall Andrewes's sermon preached nearly a decade before, to Queen Elizabeth on March 4, 1598, when he pronounced: "This time is the time when all hypocrites, atheists, tag and rag, come in and seek Him in a sort; and will not we be confounded to see ourselves in their number? Nay, to say what must be said for true it is, it is past the Devil's time." They recall, too, his sermon preached on Good Friday, March 26, 1605, before King James: "Our sight then is Jesus, and in Jesus what? you have called us hither, say they in the Canticles, to see your Shulamite;—'what shall we see in him?' What? saith the Spouse, but as 'the company of an army,' that is, many legions of good sights, an ocean or bottomless depth of manifold high perfections. We shall lose ourselves, we shall be confounded to see in him all that may be shewed us, the object is too great."

These are but a few examples. But it emerges clearly, I think, that in the years that saw the making of the AV, a social perception of the confusions and confounding of rapidly changing English challenged conservative and learned arbiters of eloquence. There was a "new world of words," to return to Edward Phillips's title, but there were also dark worlds: the noise of Gil's bastard menagerie, the explosions of plots and the ragtags of unbelievers in Andrewes; and the strange hell of Milton. More work in this area needs to be done, of course, but what I am suggesting here, in the end, is that to understand the place of the KJV in the changing landscapes of its English is not simply to perform statistical reviews of vocabulary or chart popular appropriations of its metaphorics. It is, instead, to look closely at those very passages in which linguistic change and verbal challenge are the themes of Old and New Testament narrative. The language of the scenes of Babel and of Pentecost show us how a particular word can

stand as a touchstone for linguistic inquiry and social understanding. To recall Joseph Bullokar's words of 1616, "it is familiar among best writers to usurp strange words." Let us look closely at the KJV to see the familiar, the usurped, and the strange.

Notes

1. The growth in vocabulary and the features that distinguish early modern English are issues summarized in the major textbooks of the history of the English language. See, in particular, Albert C. Baugh and Thomas Cable, *A History of the English Language* (5th ed.; Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 2005), chs. 8 and 9; Roger Lass, ed., *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, vol. 3: *1476–1776* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), especially the section by Terttu Nevalainen, "Early Modern English Lexis and Semantics," 332–458; Seth Lerer, *Inventing English: A Portable History of the Language* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), chs. 10 and 11. See too the important work of Manfred Gorlach, *Introduction to Early Modern English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

2. These quotations come from Edward Phillips, *A New World of English Words, or, a General Dictionary* (London: Tyler, 1658); and John Bullokar, *An English Expositor: Teaching the Interpretation of the Hardest Words Used in Our Language* (London: Legatt, 1616).

3. For the broad outlines of English biblical translation and the place of the AV in it, see the various accounts in the following: Olga S. Opfell, *The King James Bible Translators* (London: McFarland, 1982); Alister E. McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 2001); Adam Nicolson, *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003); Gordon Campbell, *Bible: The Story of the King James Version, 1611–2011* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); David Norton, *The King James Bible: A Short History from Tyndale to Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Hannibal Hamlin and Norman W. Jones, eds., *The King James Bible after 400 Years* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Harold Bloom, *The Shadow of a Great Rock: A Literary Appreciation of the King James Bible* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

4. See David Norton, "The Bible as a Reviver of Words: The Evidence of Anthony Purver, a Mid-Eighteenth-century Critic of the English of the King James Bible," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 86 (1985): 515–33.

5. See the discussion in Hamlin and Jones, "The King James Bible and Its Reception History," in *King James Bible after 400 Years*, 7, quoting David Norton on "AVolatry." See also, Norton, *King James Bible: Short History*, 195.

6. See David Crystal, *Begat: The King James Bible and the English Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); and idem, *Think on My Words: Exploring Shakespeare's Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

7. Selden's remarks, from *Table Talk* (1689), are frequently quoted and discussed in the literature. I rely on the material in McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 265.

8. See the discussion in M. L. Samuels, *Linguistic Evolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972).

9. On Alexander Gil, see the discussion throughout E. J. Dobson, *English Pronunciation: 1500–1700* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968). The Latin version of the *Logonomia Anglica* has been published in facsimile in the series English Linguistics, 1500–1800, no. 68 (ed. R. C. Alston; Menston, Yorkshire: Scolar Press, 1968). There is a modern English translation, *Logonomia Anglica* (ed. Bror Danielsson and A. Gabrelson; trans. R. C. Alston; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1972). I quote from these editions.

10. All quotations from *Paradise Lost* are from the edition of John T. Shawcross, ed., *The Complete Poetry of John Milton* (rev. ed.; New York: Anchor, 1971).

11. Quotations from the sermons of Lancelot Andrewes come from the edition available online, at http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/andrewes/lancebib.htm.

English Printing before the King James Bible: A Reconsideration

David J. Davis

English printing in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is of immense importance to the King James Bible and is perhaps one of the most overlooked or oversimplified aspects of the Bible's origin. Of course, it is not difficult to understand why this is the case. When compared to the Bible itself or its impact on Western society, the nature of English printing does not present nearly as riveting a subject.[1] When we gaze upon the monumental title page that introduced readers to what would become the most widely read English book, the printing industry fades like a dwindling shadow. The title page, reproduced at the beginning of this volume, created by the Dutch artist Cornelius Boel, directs our attention to what was considered important at the time: it is the great cloud of witnesses, it is the Trinity symbolized, it is the Gospels of Christ (represented by the four Evangelists), and it is the Old Testament Law and the priesthood of Moses and Aaron.[2] The text, not the producers of the text, deserves our undivided attention.

The point of this article is not to diminish the text in any way, but rather to enrich our appreciation for it by providing a picture of the print trade that produced it. For several decades, scholars have understood the English printing trade to be something of an impoverished and backward step-brother to its continental counterparts in the Low Countries, Germany, and France. After the initial explosion of English print with William Caxton (ca. 1422–1491) and his understudies, English presses produced fewer and lesser quality works. The English trade was small (having only ninety-three members in the Stationers' Company in 1557), and it lacked a regular supply of skilled labor and quality materials.[3] England did not even have a well-established paper mill until 1588. Because of these things, scholars have often bemoaned what Andrew Pettegree calls "the

English exception" because it did not measure up to its continental neighbors.[4] In fact, the English trade was dependent upon Europe for any and all high quality products. Likewise, Anthony Wells-Cole has described English book illustration as something of a "perversity" because it consisted of either imported European prints or very poor copies of the originals.[5] While there is not anything necessarily untrue in these assessments (though Wells-Cole's characterization is a bit of hyperbole), they are altogether unhelpful in understanding the nature of the English trade.

From the picture painted, it is difficult to see how English printers were able to emerge so quickly from this dark age of printing to produce something like the King James Bible. In most other areas of historical scholarship, models of social backwardness—the proverbial "dark age"—immediately preceding sudden moments of renaissance are eventually brushed aside for more nuanced and careful descriptions that identify lines of progression and connection. We hope soon to see this happen in our understanding of English print.

Here I would like to set out a reconsideration of English print, taking these serious limitations into account, offering more useful characteristics of the printing trade before the King James Bible appeared. These characteristics will compose a different vision of the printing trade, one that was both vibrant and evolving within its material limitations, ambitious in its efforts, and much more resourceful than is often recognized. I will consider three aspects: the nature of printing as both a business and an expression of religious faith, the effects of the internationalism of English print, and the practice of recycling and reusing printing material. Rather than a line-by-line historical account, I intend to pinpoint those aspects of English print that contributed to a unique climate of printing that would produce the King James Bible.

Religious Print: The Business of Piety

Part of the problem latent within the general misunderstanding of English printing is the misconception that the English trade was a top-down, heavily censorious, and tightly centralized machine, driven by doctrinal alignments. By extension, it is easy to view the printers as mere propagandists and religious zealots intent upon proliferating their dogma. In Pettegree's assessment of things, we have a picture of a stop-go-stop-go industry that can never get off the ground before the religious affiliations of the monarchy shift (first in the 1530s, then again in 1540, and so on).[6] Thus we are

fed the narrative that Edward VI's reign was an exalted time for printing and that Queen Mary's was not. Fortunately, the myth that Queen Mary's reign witnessed a lapse or even a near collapse of printing—seemingly because she did not share the progressive mind-set of her Protestant counterparts—has been thoroughly challenged.[7] Nevertheless, it is important not to neglect the fact that religious loyalties and the censorship apparatus had a hand in limiting what was being read. But this is neither unique to England nor is it necessarily more rigorous in England than in other countries. Indeed, one could argue that England, particularly under Elizabeth, was much less censorious than other countries.[8]

It is true, England possessed a centralized machine of print regulation in its Stationers' Company, but many more books that were not doctrinally mainstream survived the licensing process than one might expect. Likewise, works were printed between 1558 and 1603 that could be classified as either un-Protestant or pre-Protestant, including: the liturgical *Kalendar of Shepherds*, the Franciscan Bartholomeus Anglicus's book *De proprietatibus rerum*, and the late medieval *Ship of Fools*.[9] All of these were printed, usually more than once, and, it was often hard-nosed Protestant printers who were publishing these works. Elsewhere, the medieval devotional Thomas à Kempis's *De Imitatione Christi* was one of the most popular books of the English Reformation. Three different translations—two of which retained traditional references and wording—in numerous editions circulated in the sixteenth century.[10]

It should be noted that for the printers neither their own personal religious opinions nor the prevailing religious policies of the state were the absolute determining factor in what they printed. Respectable Catholic printers like Wynkyn de Worde who gladly published Catholic missals and breviaries were in trouble with authorities in the late 1520s for publishing Lutheran and other works by Reformation leaders.[11] Then, in the 1540s when Henry VIII reverted to a more traditional religious policy, his favorite printers like Richard Grafton and Edward Whitchurch followed suit, avoiding anything too combatively reformed. In fact, Grafton along with John Daye (or Day) published Catholic primers in the 1540s and 1550s, many of which contained what the printers themselves must have considered idolatrous images of the Virgin and God.[12] Later in the century, conservative and crypto-Catholic printers like John Cawood and Richard Tottle avoided publishing any overtly papist texts in Elizabeth's reign.[13] To suggest that these men produced works along strict religious lines simply does not hold up to scrutiny. The closer one looks, the more complex the

picture becomes, and the printers' doctrinal loyalties seem more ambiguous.

Another dangerous oversimplification that should be addressed is the idea that printers were little more than early modern versions of consumer-oriented capitalists. Alexandra Halasz, Chandra Mukerji, and to a lesser extent David Hawkes have put forth varying renditions of the idea that books and other printed matter became commodities, indicating a growing hedonism and materialism in the early modern period.[14] Thus the printing of books is described as the "movement of goods" and the "production and use of consumer commodities."[15] Although these scholars say very little about the publishers themselves, it is a logical extension that the producers of these texts served as distributors and purveyors of this new market economy driven by tastes, trends, and fashions. Within such categories, printers become businessmen first and foremost, with little regard for other religious and cultural factors. Their stock is nothing more than the means by which they convert material commodities into capital, thus completing the commercial cycle.

Certainly, no one would disagree with the assertion that printers were businessmen. John Daye went to great financial pains to publish John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* (ca. 1563) because he expected a bountiful return. Likewise, in the 1570s Christopher Barker contended for a license to print the Geneva Bible because he knew it would bring him a small fortune.[16] However, to plot purely economic and consumerist motivations on early modern print is misleading. Printers certainly printed to make money, but that was hardly the ultimate motivation, particularly for those stationers in the business of religious print. In this regard, Elizabeth Evenden offers a more balanced assessment of John Daye's financial success in describing him as a "godly printer," who was gifted with an incredible "business acumen."[17] Similar things could be said of Catholic printers like William Carter, who opened up a short-lived press in the late 1570s, publishing several Catholic devotionals in rapid succession.[18] This brought in a profit for Carter, selling his books to recusant and crypto-Catholic communities. It also came at great risks—both economic and mortal—as Carter's own martyrdom would illustrate. Other printers suffered in different ways. Economic risks surrounding the printing of lavish books for devotion and study nearly bankrupted Henry Bynneman in the early 1580s, when several illustrated volumes failed to sell in any great number.[19] In other words, his books were pretty but not profitable.

Not everyone in the English print trade was a person of principle. There will always be, in every industry, the sort of rapacious scoundrels who are motivated entirely by profit.[20] However, we need to avoid strictly adhering to the model set out by Halasz and the like who, as she describes it, positions "printers" merely "as labor in relation to … capital."[21] This idea needs to be eclipsed by a more thorough and accurate perspective that sees both religion and finance in a tension that compelled early modern print forward. Certainly, the early years of the King James Bible reflected this tension, when the three publishers responsible for the Bible all found themselves in financial straits. To summarize the careers of these men as purely religious propagandists or an early version of venture capitalists fails to appreciate the balancing act they performed between cost/benefit analysis, political posturing for wealthy patrons, the material demands of their industry, and their own understanding of the cultural, religious, and social contours of their readership.

The International English Book Trade

European influence infused the printing of early English Bibles with unique characteristics. That the King James Bible's title page was created by a Dutchman is only a single point on a long line of continental influences that stretch back to the genesis of English print. The earliest Coverdale Bible was created abroad in Antwerp, and its Dutch illustrations copied from Hans Sebald Beham's *Biblische Historien* (ca. 1533) would become a benchmark of English print for the next several decades.[22] Likewise, the woodcuts printed in the Great Bible (ca. 1539) and subsequent editions of Tyndale's New Testament and the Coverdale Bible in the 1540s originated in the European shops of Hans Holbein, Lucas Cranach, and others. Then, in 1560, the Geneva Bible was printed in France for the first sixteen years of its tenure. Also, much of the material that went into the hefty Bishops' Bible (ca. 1568) was created by the German printmaker Virgil Solis.[23]

Traditionally, historians have usually seen the international nature of English printing as symptomatic of the trade's stunted growth in the British Isles. English print is portrayed as little more than a leech, attached to European counterparts for its very lifeblood.[24] This perspective has created something of a blind spot in our appreciation of the English trade. There is a much more positive and, I think, more useful way of understanding England's connection to the Continent. We should not deny that Europe saved the English print trade on many accounts, but neither should we ignore

the fact that this relationship altered and shaped how English printing was done. This influence gave life to an international exchange of labor, professionals, and materials across the sixteenth century. While many have bemoaned the shortcomings of the English trade that led to the need for this international influence, focusing on these shortcomings as nothing more than English deficiency is the wrong way of looking at the situation.

One way or another, early printing in England was essentially European. Not only were William Caxton, Wynkyn de Worde, and the other great early stationers of foreign birth, but also many key figures throughout the fifteenth century and into the sixteenth were not English. Much of their printing materials were imported from Europe. Also, foreign printers like Francis Regnault, Frederick Egmont, and Henry Jacobi had places of business in both France and England.[25] The stationer responsible for Holinshed's chronicles, Reinar Wolfe, had moved from Strasbourg in 1533. Wolfe became one of Thomas Cranmer's favorite printers, and he regularly did business with European printers like Christophe Froschauer at the Frankfurt Book Fair. The craftsman Stephen Kevall from Calais was denizened in London in 1535.[26] In other examples, the Dutchman Walter Lynne, who probably helped Cranmer with the 1548 English catechism, was living in London by 1540.[27] Then, sometime between 1546 and 1547, the Dutch printer Stephen Mierdman found his way to the capital. While a prolific stationer in his own right, Mierdman had been the apprentice and brother-in-law of Antwerp printer Matthias Crom, and Mierdman carried a portion of Crom's stock with him to England. Mierdman's influence and printing materials would enrich the printing of Tyndale New Testaments and other Protestant works like John Bale's *Image of Both Churches*.[28]

During the reign of Queen Mary, there was something of a role reversal, as English Protestants began moving into the printing centers of Europe, which were also the hubs of reform. Ten Englishmen have been identified as living and working in Zurich with Froschauer in the 1550s, and John Daye's former partner, Richard Jugge, worked with Egidius van der Erve in Emden.[29] The connections made during this period would serve both English and continental European reformers alike. Certainly, the English gained a great deal of experience in the European centers of reform. Also, as the wars of religion began to strangle religious tolerance in the 1560s and 1570s, it was to England that many Dutch and French Protestants turned for exile.

Perhaps the best example of how this importation of European workforce influenced English book production comes from the unknown

number of Dutch immigrants working on John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* in the 1560s.[30] European artisans and other skilled laborers, particularly from the Low Countries, found a safe haven in London. Similarly, Huguenot exiles boosted the English trade particularly in the 1570s. The London bookseller Jan Desserans worked steadily with the Huguenot printer Thomas Vautrollier producing several reformed books, including an illustrated version of Theodore Beza's *Abraham's Sacrifice*. Also, both Vautrollier and Desserans had strong connections with the Antwerp printer Christopher Plantin, who was encouraged by Desserans to print books that were easy to sell in England.[31]

Recycling Printing Materials

Finally, it is vital that we take notice of one of the most overlooked practices of early modern English printing. Part and parcel with the reliance upon Europe for many of its skilled laborers, stationers, and materials, the English print trade also proved to be adept at recycling and reusing printing materials at an astonishing rate and across a wide variety of texts. In Europe, after woodcuts and other printing materials were used they usually "joined the lumber of the print shop," but this was not the case in England.[32] Texts, woodcuts, engravings, decorative borders, title pages, and any other potentially valuable scrap were preserved for as long as possible. After the generation of printing geniuses like Caxton, English stationers became expert conservationists, often hoarding printing materials for long periods to use them in a variety of texts decades later.

There are dozens of examples of printing materials first appearing in the years prior to Henry VIII's break with Rome only to resurface in the middle or even at the end of the sixteenth century. A small woodcut of the Temptation of Christ first printed in 1514 was recycled by Cornelis Woltrop in a 1570 broadsheet about how the devil tempts every godly person.[33] Similarly, in the 1580s the Elizabethan printer Thomas East resurrected most of the materials for *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, which first appeared in Wynkyn de Worde's 1499 edition. The catechetical *Kalendar of Shepherds*, with its Virgin-centered devotional texts and medieval liturgy, proved very popular throughout the Tudor Reformation. Its materials were recycled no less than six times between 1534 and 1603.[34] In another fascinating example, a woodcut of the Annunciation of the Virgin was printed in a Book of Hours in 1522 and then in several traditional primers in the 1540s, only to be recycled by a Puritan-leaning

printer (Robert Waldegrave) for an English translation of John Calvin's sermons in 1588.[35]

It may seem strange that Protestants willingly employed Catholic images in their works. However, I believe historians specializing in this period have only scratched the surface in exploring the tension Protestants experienced between their repulsion of idolatry and the appeal of certain religious—albeit traditionally iconic—images. One possible explanation for this ambivalence may be found in the attitude exemplified by Stephen Batman, who was likely a librarian at Lambeth Palace in the 1560s. Batman explained:

> he is no wyse man. yt for the haveng of spiders, Scorpions, or any outher noysom thinge in his howse will therefore set the whole howse on fier: for by that meanes, he disfornisheth himselfe of his howse: and so doo men by rashe borneng of ancient Recordes lose the knoweldge of muche learnenge / there be meanes and wayes, to presarve the good corne by gathering oute the wedes.[36]

Or, in the words of the old idiom, do not throw the baby out with the bathwater. Also, this practice extended into printing materials created during the Reformation. If Protestants were willing to employ pre-Reformation woodcuts, they energetically recycled their own images, borders, fonts, and so on for new editions. Thomas Hill's physiological discourse, *The Contemplation of Mankinde* (1571), was printed by William Seres with forty-nine woodcuts. Several stationers recycled these images in the 1580s and 1590s for at least thirteen different works like the Puritan text *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), along with three editions of Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*.[37] The sixty-two woodcuts printed in the judgment book *Certaine Secrete Wonders of Nature* (1569) were recycled by at least three different printing houses for several other judgment books, along with a pamphlet on coney catching and a broadside ballad on the death of certain local judges in Lincolnshire.[38] In one of the most profound examples of recycling, the image of Christ Triumphant was used in more than a dozen editions of various theological texts between 1579 and 1603. Originally created for John Daye's publication of John Foxe's *Christ Jesus Triumphant* (1579), the image of Christ standing over death and the serpent was recycled into the works of Richard Turnball, Richard Hooker, Hugh Latimer, and Thomas Sternhold's edition of the *Psalmes*.[39] Although the image of the resurrection was a popular theme within post-

Tridentine English Catholic prayer books, at least here the image was co-opted as a standard for Protestant theology.[40]

The printing of Bibles was no different regarding the recycling practice. The printing materials for the Coverdale Bible were frequently reused in copies of Tyndale's New Testament, Protestant Psalters, and later Bibles. Several of the woodcuts in the Bishops' Bible created by Virgil Solis were used in works like Richard Grafton's *A Chronicle at Large* (1569), helping to minimize the cost of creating entirely new images.[41] Of course, the best examples of recycling in the context of Bible making are the images created for the book of Revelation that circulated in the sixteenth century. At least five different series of woodcuts—from European artists like Cranach, Holbein, and Beham—were printed in more than two dozen editions of Bibles and New Testaments until the end of the 1560s.[42]

It is easy to dismiss this recycling as haphazard and symptomatic of a printing trade that valued cheap production over quality. Certainly, this may be true in some cases. It is certainly the case that some printers employed pictures and decorations to make money. One author even preempted this suggestion, writing, "The Printer (you will say) hath printed it full of Pictures, to make it bought the better." However, the writer countered that the book was "more meritorious" because of the images, which seemingly he believed should encourage his readers to "buy it the sooner."[43] The recycling of printing materials certainly saved money. But it also constructed a unique milieu within early modern print that created material, visual, and textual connections across different editions and texts and across a long period of time. At least in terms of its visual presentation, this similarity and repetition created a much more cohesive print culture than what would otherwise have existed.

Equally significant is that almost all major examples of the reuse of religious images had clear intentions and significance to the text in which they were printed. For example, at first glance, a reader may think that the image of Moses communing with God was randomly printed in early Great and Coverdale Bibles, as it was often printed multiple times alongside text that described events long after Moses' death. However, in every case, the image always correlated to a prophetic vision of heaven or another Old Testament prophet praying to God. Even when images were altered, the alterations regularly were performed to communicate particular messages to the reader.[44] Also, we should keep in mind Ruth Luborsky's adept assessment about these printing materials, that even though they were used in a variety of texts they did not lose their visual or symbolic

value.[45] Indeed, many images served as both illustrations of their text and as meta-texts that could be seen (and read) alongside the text itself, or as something somewhat disconnected from the text, but nonetheless full of meaning.[46] Images conveyed a communicative value divorced from the text as well as in association with the written word. This is why commonplace books of the period regularly have cut-and-pasted woodcuts into blank pages, without any commentary or associated text. What was seen, as well as what was read, informed and even transformed the culture.[47]

The King James Bible was produced by a conglomerate of printers led by Robert Barker, but it also developed around a particularly complex printing trade, which provided the unique milieu from which the King James Bible would eventually spring. The industry standing behind the Bible demonstrated an incredible resilience in the face of its own deficiencies and a capacity to adapt to market and cultural forces that—through no fault of the printers—was set against the kind of robust development of printing in England that we see in other countries. In its adaptations, this print trade created something special, even though its specialty was rooted in its limitations. Rather than seeing this merely as proof positive that England did not match up to the Low Countries, France, or Germany, I would suggest we begin instead to look at how this set England apart from its neighbors. While many of the characteristics of English printing were determined by acts of survival, the printers' survival skills provided a certain level of distinctiveness to English printing, which must be understood when we approach questions of how early printing impacted English society. For in this distinctiveness, we find the potential for the construction of a unique religious and cultural identity that was being shaped and informed by the slow expansion of the printing trade.

Notes

1. For the most comprehensive collection of research on the topic see Lotte Hellinga and J. B. Trapp, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain,* vol. 3: *1400–1557* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); John Barnard, D. F. McKenzie, and Maureen Bell, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain,* vol. 4: *1557–1695* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

2. Margery Corbett and R. W. Lightbown, *The Comely Frontispiece: The Emblematic Title-Page in England, 1550–1660* (London: Routledge, 1979), 110.

3. Peter Blayney, *The Bookshops in Paul's Cross Churchyard* (London: Biographical Society, 1990); Cyprian Blagden, *The Stationers' Company: A History, 1403–1959* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), chs. 2–4.

4. Andrew Pettegree, "Printing and the English Reformation: The English Exception," in *The Beginnings of English Protestantism* (ed. Peter Marshall and Alec Ryrie; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 157–79.

5. Anthony Wells-Cole, *Art and Decoration in Elizabethan and Jacobean England: The Influence of Continental Prints, 1558–1625* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 125.

6. Pettegree, "Printing and the English Reformation," 157–99.

7. Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England under Queen Mary* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 63–70.

8. Deborah Shuger, *Censorship and Cultural Sensibility: The Regulation of Language in Tudor-Stuart England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Cyndia Clegg, *Press Censorship in Elizabethan England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

9. Ruth Luborsky and Elizabeth Ingram, *A Guide to English Illustrated Books, 1536–1603* (2 vols.; Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 166; Tempe, Ariz.: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1998), 1:673–81; Sebastian Brant, *Stultifera navis or The ship of fooles* (London: Thomas East, 1570); also idem, *The Ship of Fools* (trans. A. Barclay; London: Henry Sotheran, 1874); Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *Batman uppon Bartholome His Booke De proprietatibus rerum, Newly Corrected, Enlarged and Amended* (London: East, 1582).

10. Elizabeth Hudson, "English Protestants and the *Imitatio Christi*, 1580–1620," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 19 (1988): 541–58; Ian Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 306.

11. David McKitterick, *Printing and the Book Trade in Cambridge, 1534–1698* (vol. 1 of *A History of the Cambridge University Press*; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 22–37.

12. Grafton printed *The Primer Set Foorth by the Kynges Maiestie and His Clergie* (London: Grafton, 1545). Daye's primer, interestingly, appeared in Queen Mary's reign: *The Prymer in Latine* (London: Wayland, 1557).

13. Alec Ryrie, "Cawood, John (1513/14–1572)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (ed. Lawrence Goldman). Online: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4958 (henceforth *ODNB*).

14. David Hawkes, *Idols of the Marketplace: Idolatry and Commodity Fetishism in English Literature, 1580–1680* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2001); Alexandra Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Chandra Mukerji, *From Graven Images: Patterns of Modern Materialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

15. Mukerji, *From Graven Images*, 77.

16. David Kathman, "Barker, Christopher (1528/9–1599)," *ODNB*.

17. Elizabeth Evenden, *Patents, Pictures and Patronage: John Day and the Tudor Book Trade* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008), 188.

18. T. A. Birrell, "William Carter (1549–84): Recusant Printer, Publisher, Binder, Stationer, Scribe, and Martyr," *Recusant History* 28 (2006): 22–42; Henry Stanley Bennett, *English Books and Readers, 1558–1603* (1965; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 78–80.

19. Mark Eccles, "Bynneman's Books," *The Library*, 5th series, 12 (1957): 81–92.

20. This underbelly of the printing trade has been studied in such works as Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers: Propaganda during the English Civil Wars and Interregnum* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2004).

21. Halasz, *Marketplace of Print*, 98.

22. Luborsky and Ingram, *Guide to English Illustrated Books,* 1:85–86.

23. Ibid., 1:115–16, 122–23; Margaret Aston, "The Bishops' Bible Illustrations," in *The Church and the Arts: Papers Read at the 1990 Summer Meeting and the 1991 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society* (ed. Diana Wood; Studies in Church History 28; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 267–85.

24. David McKitterick has pointed out that the dependence upon printing materials was not always one way. It was possible for European printers to look to England for printing materials in certain circumstances. See *Print, Manuscript, and the Search for Order, 1450–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 90.

25. Although somewhat dated, E. Gordon Duff's encyclopedic works on early English print remain a dependable authority on the lives of these printers: *A Century of the English Book Trade* (London: Blades, East and Blades, 1905), 42–43, 79–80, 133–34; idem, *The Printers, Stationers, and Bookbinders* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906), 105, 108, 194–99.

26. McKitterick, *History of Cambridge University Press,* 1:49; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 176.

27. Wolfe died before the chronicles could be printed (eventually by Henry Bynneman in 1577 and thereafter); however, it was Wolfe's materials on the presses: Andrew Pettegree, "Wolfe, Reyner (*d.* in or before 1574)," *ODNB*. For more on Walter Lynne, see MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer,* 95–96, 171–72.

28. Willem Heijting, "Mierdman, Steven [Niclaes van Oldenborch] (*c.*1510–1559)," *ODNB*.

29. Christina Garrett, *The Marian Exiles: A Study in the Origins of Elizabethan Puritanism* (1938; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 9, 202.

30. The academic community owes a great debt of gratitude to Elizabeth Evenden for her study of Daye's connections to the European trade in *Patents, Pictures and Patronage: John Day and the Tudor Book Trade* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008).

31. Colin Clair, *Christopher Plantin* (London: Cassell, 1960), 209; idem, "Thomas Vautrollier," *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 35 (1960): 223–28. Vautrollier, though known for his printing of Thomas Norton's translation of Calvin's *Institutes*, was also a popular figure in Scottish printing. His printing of John Knox's *History of the Reformation* was seized by John Whitgift as a violation of printing regulations (Clair, "Thomas Vautrollier," 226–27).

32. Andrew Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 121.

33. Luborsky and Ingram, *Guide to English Illustrated Books*, 2:25.

34. Ibid., 1:673–81.

35. David Davis, "Images on the Move: The Virgin, the *Kalendar of Shepherds*, and the Transmission of Woodcuts in Tudor England," *Journal of the Early Book Society* 12

(2009): 99–132; Martha Driver, "When Is a Miscellany Not Miscellaneous? Making Sense of the 'Kalender of Shepherds,' " *Yearbook of English Studies* 33 (2003): 199–214.

36. Trinity College Library (Cambridge), MS. B. 14. 19 (305), fol. 67v. Cited in M. B. Parkes, "Stephen Batman's Manuscripts," in *Medieval Heritage: Essays in Honour of Tadahiro Ikegami* (ed. Masahiko Kanno, Hiroshi Yamashita, Masatoshi Kawasaki, Junko Asakawa, and Naoko Shirai; Tokyo: Yushado, 1997), 143.

37. Luborsky and Ingram, *Guide to English Illustrated Books*, 1:445.

38. Ibid., 1:235. English judgment books, particularly popular in Elizabethan and Jacobean England, were collections of anecdotes about "providential punishments inflicted upon shameless sinners" (Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999], 65).

39. John Foxe, *Christ Jesus Triumphant* (London, 1578).

40. When compared to Protestant images of the resurrection, Catholic representations even during the Elizabethan period are far more numerous; see Luborsky and Ingram, *Guide to English Illustrated Books*, 2:174.

41. Richard Grafton, *A Chronicle at Large* (2 vols.; London: Denham, 1569).

42. Luborsky and Ingram, *Guide to English Illustrated Books*, 1:84.

43. Anthony Munday, *Zelauto: The Fountaine of Fame* (London: John Charlewood, 1580), sig. H1r.

44. I have argued this more extensively in "'The vayle of Eternall memorie': Contesting Representations of Queen Elizabeth in English Woodcuts," *Word & Image* 27 (2011): 65–76.

45. Ruth Luborsky, "The Pictorial Image of the Jew in Elizabethan Secular Books," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 46 (1995): 452.

46. Lee Palmer Wandel, "Envisioning God: Image and Liturgy in Reformation Zurich," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 31 (1993): 20–41.

47. Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace Books and the Structure of Renaissance Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). One of the best examples of the use of woodcuts in commonplace manuscripts is the volume compiled by the Lutheran Johannes Spon, which contains over three dozen printed woodcuts: British Library, Egerton MS. 1178: ALBUM Amicorum of Johannes Spon, of Augsburg.

The King James Bible and the Language of Liturgy

Robin Griffith-Jones

> We desire that the Scripture may speak like itself, as in the language of Canaan, that it may be understood even of the very vulgar.
>
> — Dr. Miles Smith, the King James Bible preface, "The Translators to the Reader"

The question was properly and widely asked, during the 2011 celebration of the KJV's quatercentenary, whether the KJV still satisfies the translators' own aspirations. Two reservations mounted a more radical challenge: perhaps the KJV had not risen to its own ideals, even at the time. There would then be good reason to qualify the enthusiasm expressed for the KJV by its devotees.

First, the KJV was oddly archaic even in 1611. So much of its ubiquitous usage was out of date: "ye," "doth," hath," and "saith."[1] "Thou" and "thee" were by 1600 used by seniors to juniors (who used "you" in reply); how jarring it surely was to have God addressed by his creatures as "thou."

And second: Over a decade ago David Norton set out to show that the creation of literature was no part of the translators' intention.[2] A stronger version of this argument has been advanced: that any claim to find such beauty in the KJV is perverse. To see why, we need only look at John Bois's notes on the discussions of the New Testament's last books: a fair proportion of Bois's notes—and, we might surely conclude, of the discussions—were in *Latin*; the translators themselves, then, were not thinking in English at all. Those middle-aged classicists turned in an English translation smelling of mothballs, in the cut and fashion of the translators' long-gone youth.[3]

The argument can be pursued further still. Some of the scholars, at home in Latin, were at home in Hebrew too. It is no surprise, then, that

they were content with a crabbed, Hebraic version of the Old Testament. John Selden was among the first critics of the KJV:

> If I translate a French book into English, I turn it into English phrase and not into French English. "Il fait froid": I say it is cold, not it makes cold; but the Bible is translated into English words rather than into English phrase: the Hebraisms are kept and the phrase of that language is kept. As for example, "he uncovered her Shame," which is well enough so long as scholars have to do with it, but when it comes among the common people, Lord what gear [mockery] do they make of it.[4]

We are urged, then, by critics of the KJV to acknowledge that the translation was, even at the time of its issue, archaic, clumsy, and open to misunderstanding. Some such critics perhaps have a further agenda. What was already true in 1611 is more patently true today. And its acknowledgment will help free us from the strange reverence for the KJV that has infected parts of the modern church on both sides of the Atlantic. In the United Kingdom there are churches that by their loyalty to the KJV proclaim their loyalty to—and longing for—an imagined and imaginary England of times past that was supposedly home to an indigenous, stable population in a cohesive culture nurtured by its religion and in particular by the KJV and the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. And in the United States there are theologically, socially, and politically conservative churches for whom the use of the KJV is a totem of resistance against a modernizing liberalism.[5]

These traditions find few friends in today's liberal academy. And within that academy we can surely see that the KJV had feet of clay from the very start. The translators, heirs to William Tyndale, desired "that the Scripture may speak like itself, as in the language of Canaan, that it may be understood even of the very vulgar";[6] but the archaic, clumsy KJV fell short of its own translators' ideals even at the time, and those translators would surely be appalled at its continued use today, after four hundred years of linguistic change, as an icon of ancient and true religion. It is the principles of the KJV translators themselves, giants on the shoulders of the giant Tyndale, that speak most clearly against the church's ongoing use of their own translation.

Those two reservations and this (polemical) conclusion can, I think, be sustained only when the *function* of the KJV is left out of account.

The KJV and the Creation of a Liturgical Language

The KJV was a liturgical text: appointed (even if the details of that appointment are unclear)[7] to be read in churches, and to be heard in the context of the prayer book of 1559, edited in 1604. The 1604 book kept to the language of the 1559, itself a reediting of the 1552 edition. The language of the prayer book was by 1611 as archaic as the language of the Tyndalean KJV. The English of Cranmer and of Tyndale matched each other; and so—if they were to be performed together—they should. There were powerful political reasons for the conservatism of both the 1604 prayer book and the 1611 Bible;[8] and this restraint found expression in the *liturgical* conservatism that consequently informed them both.

The Puritans' pressure for change was focused on liturgy. Frank Brightman pointed out that at Hampton Court John Reynolds (or Rainolds) picked particularly on imperfections in an epistle and in psalms from the Great Bible that would be liturgically read: Gal 4:25; Ps 105:28; and Ps 106:30.[9] But on the other hand, old and familiar forms had a standing that was hard to ignore. The archaisms characteristic of the KJV characterize as well the prayer book of 1604—and then of 1662—in whose services the KJV was heard. God is consistently addressed as "thou" and "thee"; and the Old English endings "-eth" and "-est" are retained.[10] Both Bible and prayer book *looked* archaic: they (and government documents) were generally printed, throughout the seventeenth century, in the antiquated form of black letter Gothic.[11]

To do justice to this undertow of conservatism, we should look both backward to the Bishops' Bible and forward to the prayer book revisions of the later seventeenth century.

Archbishop Matthew Parker wrote, in the Bishops' Bible, the preface to the queen. He recalled that (among the "Observations," the rules or observances, "respected of the Translators") one observation was "not to make it vary much from that translation which was commonly used by Public order" except where needed for accuracy; and in the words of the Observations themselves, "to follow the Commune English Translation, used in the Churches and not to recede from it."[12] Similarly in 1604 Archbishop Richard Bancroft's first rule to the KJV translators read: "The ordinary Bible read in the church, commonly called 'the bishops' Bible,' to be followed, and as little altered, as the truth of the original will permit." The rules for the KJV translators were as closely dependent on the bishops' Observations as the KJV itself was dependent on the bishops' finished

work. Both the KJV translation itself and the principles informing it were conservative; and both were created to carry on an established tradition of public reading in church.

Among the grounds for restraint, Miles Smith identified in 1611 the value vested in well-known language. Smith points out the translators' reluctance to change even single words that were familiar: Jerome had been agitated that someone changed κράβαττος to σκίμπους, "though the difference be little or none";[13] and Augustine reports that he was much abused for changing *cucurbita* (the reading to which the people were used) into *hedera*. "Now if this happen in better times, and upon so small occasion, we might justly fear hard censure if generally we should make verbal and unnecessary changes."[14] The translators feared popular resistance to change. Once more the KJV translators were following a principle that had shaped such work in the sixteenth century.[15] The Epistles and Gospels for use at Communion, in the 1604 prayer book, were still from the Great Bible.[16] It is no surprise that Coverdale's Psalter, of all the Bible's books, endured. It was the best known of all texts. Anglican priest Richard Hooker, who through his Olympian *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (books 1–4, 1594; book 5, 1597) became a founding father of Anglican theology, praises the Psalms and concludes: "Hereof it is that we covet to make the Psalms especially familiar unto all. This is the very cause why we iterate the Psalms oftener than any other part of Scripture besides; the cause wherefore we inure the people together with their minister, and not the minister alone to read them as other parts of Scripture he doth."[17] The second edition of the Bishops' Bible omitted the bishops' own Psalter and retained just Coverdale's familiar text from the Great Bible.

From the past to the future: similar conservatism will be at work again in the 1662 prayer book. In his proposals for emendation, Matthew Wren acknowledges that "no Language but at first is more imperfect and unpolished, and in every Age (of seventy years) admits much variation." But the three general rules with which he starts are modest enough. (1) Every word throughout (as much as can be) should be commonly understood. "The Compilers of the Old Book" had expounded Latinate words with a further word more familiar in English (thus "erred and strayed," "perils and dangers"); this was by now "but an idle repetition" in which the explanatory word was liable to more misconstruction than the other. (2) Whatsoever is not very perfect and right, be it never so small, should now be set right; with the caveat that such changes might in fact lead on to changes of greater consequence. (3) It is "so long since the former

Book was composed, that the errors thereof have now by use corrupted the Language." Wren gives an example: "which" should be used where the antecedent refers to a thing, "who" where it refers to a person; the Henrician litany had misused "which"; and the abuse had spread throughout the book (as in, "Our Father, Which art in Heaven").[18] Wren would see correct usage restored. None of this calls for the text to be brought up to date. On the contrary: old blemishes—or old devices that had become blemishes—should be undone. Wren has in mind the perfection of the old, not the introduction of the new.

The changes finally made to the prayer book in 1661/1662 were in part "for the more proper expressing of some words or phrases of ancient usage, in terms more suitable to the language of the present times; and the clearer explanation of some other words and phrases that were either of doubtful signification, or otherwise liable to misconstruction" (1661, preface); and in general the text of the KJV was substituted for that of the Great Bible "for a more perfect rendering of such portions of holy Scripture, as are inserted into the Liturgy." But we might ask what in practice were those changes from ancient usage. Brightman identifies them as the substitution of "who" for "which" in relation to persons, "is and "are" for "be," and "acknowledge" for "knowledge"; and as the new explanations of liturgical terms such as "Litany."[19]

Against these modest changes, however, we must set a countervailing tendency: (1) Archaisms are introduced: there is an increase in "ye" over "you."[20] (2) It was probably an archaism by 1661/2 (as it had not been in 1611) to avoid "its."[21] (3) Among the seventeen concessions made by the bishops at the Savoy Conference, one was "that the psalms be collated with the former translation … and printed according to it";[22] and the Psalter, duly collated with the Great Bible's, was included in the 1662 prayer book.[23] Almost a third of the prayer book was now a text from 1538–1539. (4) The prayers newly composed and introduced are indistinguishable in style from the old.[24] This point we do best to expand by a simple comparison of two prayers of thanksgiving for deliverance from civil strife, the first from 1604, the second from 1662.

> 1604: O Almighty God, who art a strong tower of defence unto thy Servants against the face of their Enemies: we yield thee praise and thanksgiving for our deliverance from those great and apparent dangers wherewith we were compassed: We acknowledge it thy goodness that we were not delivered over as a prey unto them, beseeching thee still

> to continue such thy mercies towards us, that all the world may know that thou art our Saviour and mighty deliverer, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
>
> 1662: O eternal God our heavenly Father, who alone makest men to be of one mind in a house, and stillest the outrage of a violent and unruly people: We bless thy holy Name, that it hath pleased thee, to appease the seditious tumults which have been lately raised up amongst us: most humbly beseeching thee to grant to all of us grace, that we may henceforth obediently walk in thy holy Commandments and leading a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty, may continually offer unto thee our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for these thy mercies towards us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.[25]

We are watching here the sustained creation of a *liturgical language*; and the KJV, a liturgical text, was vital in its gestation.

The KJV, Eloquence, and Liturgical Decorum

It was not in language alone that the early 1600s were rediscovering the particular solemnity that befitted worship. The needs and aspirations of the 1550s were not those of 1610. Theology and politics had both moved on. There was a rising sense of grandeur in liturgy, of a proper dignity. Led by Lancelot Andrewes from the 1590s, "avant-garde conformists" were reintroducing painted windows, painted panels, musicians, elaborate plate, a recognizable "altar," and a programmatic dignity to worship. Hooker had already spoken of "the beauty of holiness."

> A great part of the cause, wherefore religious minds are so inflamed with the love of public devotion, is that virtue, force, and efficacy, which by experience they find that the very form and reverend solemnity of common prayer duly ordered hath, to help that imbecility and weakness in us, by means whereof we are otherwise of ourselves the less apt to perform unto God so heavenly a service, with such affection of heart, and disposition in the powers of our souls as is requisite.[26]

"What pre-eminence of dignity soever hath been either by the ordinance or through the special favour and providence of God annexed unto his Sanctuary, the principal cause thereof must needs be in regard of Common Prayer." For the house of prayer, so the Fathers teach, is "a

Court beautified with the presence of celestial powers; … there we stand, we pray, we sound forth hymns unto God, having his Angels intermingled as our associates."[27] No wonder worship is distinctive:

> If they on the contrary side do think that the same rules of decency which serve for things done unto terrene powers should universally decide what is fit in the service of God; if it be their meaning to hold it for a maxim, that the Church must deliver her public supplications unto God in no other form of speech than such as were decent, if suit should be made to the great Turk, or some other monarch, let them supply their own rule unto their own form of common prayer.[28]

The low forms of Elizabethan worship were in retreat; the first steps were being taken on the road that would lead to Laudianism.[29] Peter McCullough neatly summarizes the preacher's role in this setting: "In Lancelot Andrewes [James] found a complement to the Chapel's ceremony and music, a preacher who, like vestments, hangings and choral polyphony, could adorn his chapel on solemn feast days."[30]

In this setting we must subject the distinction between theological and literary concerns to two refinements. The first does justice to the decorum central to all rhetorical theory: an author must write in terms appropriate to his or her subject, audience, and occasion. *Refert qui audiant* (Cicero, *De oratore* 3.55.211; translation: It *matters*, who are listening).[31]

It is not helpful to respond that the Bible was set apart from such concerns with classical rhetoric. It had been an issue ever since Augustine (*De doctrina christiana* 4) how—and how highly—the rhetoric of Scripture was to be assessed.[32]

> Here someone perhaps asks whether our authors … are to be called simply wise or eloquent as well. … It seems to me that not only can nothing be wiser than they are, but also nothing more eloquent. And I dare to say that all who rightly understand what those authors say, understand as well that they should not have spoken in any other way. … Nothing should be called eloquence that does not match the person of the speaker; thus there is a certain eloquence which befits men most worthily invested with the highest authority and clearly divine. Our authors spoke with this eloquence; none other suited them, nor did theirs suit anyone else.[33]

Refert qui loquatur (It matters, who is speaking). Augustine knows none-

theless that the scriptural authors hardly conform to the practices of classical rhetoric.

> But what delights me more than I can say, in that eloquence, are not those things which they share with the orators or poets of the gentiles. I am the more struck with admiration that through some other eloquence of their own they so used that normal eloquence of ours that in them it is neither absent nor conspicuous.[34]

To do justice to Augustine (and to the influence of his style on seventeenth-century theologians) we do well to hear some of his comments in Latin. Anyone, *ut ita dixerim, perite imperitus* (skillfully unskilled, so to speak), who claimed that Paul follows the rules of rhetoric would be rightly mocked. But Augustine traces standard practices in Rom 5:3–5; "sicut ergo apostolum praecepta eloquentiae secutum fuisse non dicimus, ita quod eius sapientiam secuta sit eloquentia non negamus" (*De doctrina* 4.7.11: just, then, as we do not claim that the apostle followed the rules of eloquence, likewise we do not deny that eloquence followed his wisdom). Augustine continues with similar analyses of 2 Cor 11:16–30. "Quam sapienter dicit quamque eloquenter! Sed comes sapientiae, dux eloquentiae illam sequens, istam praecedens et sequentem non respuens" (How wisely he speaks, and how eloquently! But he is a companion of wisdom, a leader of eloquence, following the former, preceding the latter and not rejecting the one who follows him). The terms of Augustine's praise are telling: commenting on 2 Cor 11:31 ("interposita narratiuncula," a tiny little narrative interjected), he exclaims, "quid decoris, quid delectationis habeat, satis dici non potest" (*De doctrina* 4.7.13: what it has of grace, what it has of delight—it is impossible for enough to be said).

The results can be "pulcher" (4.7.20: beautiful) and "decorus" (4.20.42: seemly); and when Augustine—just as we would expect—distinguishes within Scripture between the three classical styles, "dictio submissa," "dictio temperata," and "grande dicendi genus" (restrained speech, moderate speech, and the grand form of speaking) he emphasizes the *beauty* proper to the temperate style, well suited as it is to ornament (4.20.40; cf.4.20.42, 21.48, 24.53). Augustine is clearly embarrassed that the Bible's *clausulae* (sentence endings, often given distinctive rhythms by classical authors) are so bad (20.40–41); here is one clumsiness that even he cannot make conformable to classical principles. He even suggests that a skilled composer of *clausulae* might like to improve their rhythm; "sed caven-

dum est ne divinis gravibusque sententiis, dum additur numerus, pondus detrahatur" (but we must take care, that in the addition of rhythm the divine and serious propositions are not robbed of their weight).

The presumption throughout is that there is perfect congruence between the subject, substance, style, and function of any passage in the Bible. When we, as modern readers, define literary ambition in isolation from the styles that *befit* that subject and function, we apply standards quite alien to those of the translators who were steeped in—and were themselves masters of—classical rhetoric. And their decision, whether any term or style was at any point appropriate, was at once both a literary and a theological decision.

The second refinement is a modern counterpart of the first. The style and vocabulary of a passage sets its tone, and its tone cannot be cleanly distinguished from its content. The tone of the text affects the disposition of the reader or listener toward the text; that disposition affects the text's reception; and any account of the Bible's reception is as much a theological as a literary enterprise.[35] The creation of a liturgical language, particular and archaic in its grandeur, affected the listeners' conception of God, of his word, and of his ministers authorized to declaim that word.

Once more, to discern the tradition and trajectory in which the KJV was set, it will be helpful to move beyond the KJV itself.[36] In the Geneva Bible the preface to the New Testament (1557) points out that the hard work invested in the translation might be judged "both by the faithful rendering of the sentence, and also by the propriety of the words, and perspicuity of the phrase."[37] That propriety[38] is explained in the preface to the Bible as a whole: "the Apostles who spake and wrote to the Gentiles in the Greek tongue, rather constrained them to the lively phrase of the Hebrews, then enterprised far by mollifying their language to speak as the Gentiles did;" so the translators, in their turn, in many cases reserved the Hebrew phrases.[39] This was not simply a literary decision. Confronted with an ostensibly literary problem, the translators adduced a *theological* rationale for their solution: to do as the apostles did.[40]

There was an endemic sense of the dignity, even grandeur proper to Scripture. In the bishops' condemnation of the Great Bible, in 1542, Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, "publicly read the Latin words contained in the sacred volume which he wanted—for their own full and innate meaning and for the majesty of their matter—as far as possible either to be retained in their own nature or to be turned into English with the closest

possible fit."[41] Gardiner's list is of theologically weighty words, of which a striking proportion relate to the liturgy: *ecclesia*, *poenitentia*, *contritus*, *justificare*, *baptizare*, *adorare*, *pietas*, *presbyter*, *sacrificium*, *sacramentum*, *gloria*, *ceremonia*, *mysterium*, *religio*, *communio*, *benedictio*, *satisfactio*, *confessio*. Gardiner had a particular and proper convergence of Bible and liturgy in mind.[42]

The Observations for the Bishops' Bible commanded that "all such words as soundeth in the Old Translation to any offence of lightness or obscenity be expressed with more convenient terms and phrases."[43] Is the removal of such lightness a literary or a theological decision? It is both; there is a dignity to be maintained in the Word of God.

The preface to the Douay-Rheims Bible illumines such concerns. The translators declared the Vulgate to be of translations "the gravest, sincerest, of greatest majesty," and the only translation to use.[44] But this principle left question after question still to be answered. "Amen" expresses in Hebrew an "asseveration and assurance" that "Verily" does not; it is our Saviour's "solemn and usual word to express a vehement asseveration"; and so is kept. *Paraskeuē* (which the Protestants reject) is as "solemn" a word as *Sabbath* (which they keep); Douay-Rheims keeps both, rather than "disgrace both the text and them." ("And others saying thus, After the day *of preparing* make a cold translation and short of the sense.") Advent is a solemn season, imposition of hands a solemn action in the Catholic Church; the translators keep these and similar words which "proceed even from the very words of Scripture." At Luke 2:15 (ῥῆμα) and 4:36 (λόγος) the Greek "word" is a Hebraism, rendering דָּבָר, whose other sense "thing" would be more appropriate in both verses. But "there is a certain majesty and more signification in these speeches, and therefore both Greek and Latin keep them, although it is no more the Greek or Latin phrase, then [modern English: than] it is the English." With reference to all of these considerations and decisions we might ask, Were they literary or theological? But the alternative is falsely drawn. To those English ears steeped in solemn Latinity, the English words did not do justice to the Bible's solemnity. *Literary* propriety was *theologically* important.

The translators acknowledged that this biblical English would take time to be accepted. Cognate words, for example, must be recognizably cognate: so *Evangelium* and *Evangelise*. There are cases in which, the translators claim, they needed to keep "the very words also and phrases, which may seem to the vulgar Reader and to common English ears … rudeness or ignorance: but to the discrete reader," who sees "how easily the volun-

tarie Translator may miss the true sense of the Holy Ghost," they were sure that their procedure would seem reasonable and necessary. (They also believed that "all sorts of Catholic Readers will in short time think that familiar, which at the first may seem strange & will esteem it more … then [modern English: than] if it were the common known English." There was a value in the very strangeness, the biblical particularity of the translation. Here are the heirs of Stephen Gardiner, finding propriety in Latinate words.) Once more, then, theological loyalty to the Holy Ghost demands a literary decision.

And so we come back to the KJV itself, and to John Bois's notes on the General Meeting on the Epistles of St. Paul at Stationers' Hall, London 1610.[45] Once more, propriety and dignity are at issue. Here is Heb 13:8:

Greek	Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐχθὲς καὶ σήμερον ὁ αὐτός, καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.
Vulgate	Iesus Christus heri et hodie ipse et in saecula
Tyndale	Iesus Christ yesterdaye and to daye / & the same continueth for ever.
Geneva	Iesus Christ yesterday, and to day, the same also *is* for euer.
Bishops' Bible	Iesus Christe yesterday and to day, and the same for euer
KJV	Iesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for euer.

Bois records the suggestion of Andrew Downes and its rationale: "*Yesterday, and today the same, and for ever*] A.D. Si hoc modo verba collocentur, σεμνότερος erit ὁ λόγος. A.D." The verse will be more majestic, more solemn.[46] *That* is the point. (And Downes says it in *Greek*, solemnly!) It is probably no coincidence that Downes's suggestion adheres to the word order of the Greek. That is where solemnity lay: in the original.[47] None of this is captured by the artificial distinction between literary and theological agenda. A proper solemnity pertains to both.[48]

A similar point is made by Miles Smith in the preface to the readers. He insists (in denigration of Douay-Rheims) that the Septuagint does not come near the original "for perspicuity, gravity, majesty." But it is a translation nonetheless. Smith draws an analogy with a speech of the king: it is still, in translation, the king's, "though it be not translated with the like grace, nor peradventure so fitly for phrase, nor so expressly for sense."[49] The grace and precision of the king's own speech were as important as its sense.

It will not surprise us that such discrimination can be traced through the prayer book's ongoing evolution in the seventeenth century. In the exceptions mooted at the Savoy Conference the ministers describe the form of the collects, "whence are caused many unnecessary intercisions and abruptions, which when many petitions are to be offered at the same time, are neither agreeable to the scriptural examples, nor suited to the gravity and seriousness of that holy duty."[50]

From the debate's other side we hear a recommendation from Matthew Wren, bishop of Ely (1638–1667). Referring to translations of the *Veni Creator*, he looked for a particular improvement over the 1604 prayer book: "If there be a more elegant translation of *Veni Creator* it would here be put in instead of the old … I hear that at the King's Coronation there was another."[51] Here again we should diagnose a concern, from Wren's very different viewpoint, for propriety and decorum. By the standards of Wren's time and churchmanship, "elegance" *befitted* the *Veni Creator*, to be sung or said responsorially at the Ordering of Priests.

It is perhaps too easy for us to prefer the version that is still familiar today. But we can without special pleading see why Wren preferred its brevity, focus, and eight-syllable lines. Here are the opening line of the *Veni Creator*, in its version of 1549, still printed as an alternative in 1662:

> Come Holy Ghost, Eternall God, proceeding from above,
> Both from the Father, and the Son, the God of peace and love.
> Visit our minds, into our hearts thy heavenly grace inspire,
> That truth and Godliness we may pursue with full desire.
> Thou art the very Comforter, in griefe and all distress,
> The heavenly gift of God most high; no tongue can it express.
> The fountain and the living Spring of joy Celestial:
> The fire so bright, the love so sweet, the Unction spirituall.

Here are the opening lines of the version added in 1662:

> Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
> And lighten with Celestial fire.
> Thou the anointing Spirit art,
> Who dost thy seven-fold guifts impart.
> Thy blessed unction from above,
> Is comfort, life, and fire of love.
> Enable with perpetuall light,

The dulness of our blinded sight.

Conclusion

The prayer book of 1604 and the Bible of 1611 were both liturgical texts, to be used in conjunction with each other. Their uniform style was archaic, on the trajectory that led to the prayer book of 1662: a style that by the mid-seventeenth century was recognizably and distinctively *liturgical.* The KJV translators, classically trained, knew that style must befit the text's subject, audience, and function. It was not by accident or incapacity (nor simply by royal fiat) that the translators produced a text in dignified, familiar, and ancestral language; such language was proper to the text and its role. How to meet the demands of that propriety was, in the study of every verse, an inseparably compound question of theology and style together.

From solemnity to elegance, from James I through the Civil War to Charles II—ecclesiology, taste, and tone had changed, and have changed since. The style of the 1662 prayer book and the 1611 Bible, in good measure a style of the 1530s and 1540s, does not sound, to many modern ears, either dignified or familiar or movingly atavistic. But the translators still raise for any Christian community an important question: Under what (if any) conditions and for what purposes of solemnity or elegance is an ancient, familiar, and distinctively *liturgical* language, a beauty at once so ancient and so new, desirable—or even attainable—today? What form and reverend solemnity in our own time are proper to the words of common prayer, including such portions of Holy Scripture as are inserted there? Hooker's point may still stand:

> A great part of the cause, wherefore religious minds are so inflamed with the love of public devotion, is that virtue, force, and efficacy, which by experience they find that the very form and reverend solemnity of common prayer duly ordered hath, to help that imbecility and weakness in us, by means whereof we are otherwise of ourselves the less apt to perform unto God so heavenly a service, with such affection of heart, and disposition in the powers of our souls as is requisite.[52]

Notes

1. It is ironic that the Cambridge Company translating the Apocrypha used the

modern forms—"does," "says," "his"—in five places, four of which were archaized by later editors.

2. David Norton, *A History of the English Bible as Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 2. "The much-repeated modern idea that the KJB is a literary masterpiece represents a reversal of literary opinion as striking as any in the whole history of English literature"; one of Norton's prime purposes was "to trace and account for this reversal."

3. This more radical argument is advanced by Richard Burridge, 195–226, in this volume. It may be countered by reference to any sermon of Lancelot Andrewes and to Andrewes's beautiful Augustan English. For the harmony in Andrewes of theology and its expression, see Malcolm Guite, 373–83 below. Within the KJV itself, any passage in Miles Smith's preface "To the Reader" reveals a mastery of Ciceronian English. For example: "Zeal to promote the common good, whether it be by devising anything ourselves, or revising that which hath been laboured by others, deserveth certainly much respect and esteem, but yet findeth but cold entertainment in the world. It is welcomed with suspicion instead of love, and with emulation instead of thanks: and if there be any hole left for cavil to enter, (and cavil, if it do not find a hole, will make one) it is sure to be misconstrued, and in danger to be condemned." Cited from the appendix in David G. Burke, ed., *Translation That Openeth the Window: Reflections on the History and Legacy of the King James Bible* (Society of Biblical Literature Biblical Scholarship in America 23; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 219.

4. Quoted from Norton, *History*, 108. Norton goes on (109) to point out that Selden was complaining about a Geneva rather than a KJB translation: "he has uncovered his sister's shame" (Lev 20:17). Selden might not do justice to the care that successive translators had taken over such passages.

Isa 47:3: תִּגָּל עֶרְוָתֵךְ גַּם תֵּרָאֶה חֶרְפָּתֵךְ (עֶרְוָתֵךְ thy nakedness [euphem.]; חֶרְפָּתֵךְ thy reproach/shame/disgrace); *ἀνακαλυφθήσεται ἡ αἰσχύνη σου, φανήσονται οἱ ὀνειδισμοί σου*. Bishops': Thy filthynesse shalbe discouered, and thy priuities shalbe seene. Geneva: Thy filthinesse shall be discouered, and thy shame shall be seene. Douay–Rheims: Thyne ignominie shal be discouered, and thy reproch shal be seene. KJV: Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen. "Shame," Selden's comment suggests, was current *in sensu obsceno.* Isa 47:1–2 suggests that both physical nakedness and the disgrace in such exposure were in the prophet's mind; the ambiguous translation "shame" was perhaps well chosen. What rendering, we might ask, would better have satisfied Selden? (My concern in this paper is not with orthography; most quotations will be modernized.)

5. For a perspective on KJV-loyalty in African American churches, see Rodney Sadler Jr., 455–74.

6. I have allowed Smith here to speak as a witness for the prosecution. But he is only pointing out the middle way that he and his colleagues had taken in the choice of words: "We have on the one side avoided the scrupulosity of the Puritans, who leave the old Ecclesiastical words, and betake them to other, as when they put *Washing* for *Baptism*, and *Congregation* instead of *Church*: as also on the other side we have shunned the obscurity of the Papists, in their *Azimes, Tunike, Rational, Holocausts, Praepuce, Pasche*, and a number of such like, whereof their late Translation

[i.e., the Douay-Rheims] is full, and that of purpose to darken the sense, that since they must needs translate the Bible, yet by the language thereof, it may be kept from being understood."

7. Alfred W. Pollard, *Records of the English Bible* (London: Oxford University Press, 1911), 58–60.

8. The king had good reason not to open the Pandora's box of liturgical and biblical revision in his dangerously fissiparous kingdom; and the modest changes in response to Puritan objections, once made, must suffice. See the king's *Proclamation for the Use of the Book of Common Prayer* (1604): at Hampton Court "we found mighty and vehement informations supported with so weak and slender proofs … that there was no cause why any change should have been made at all in that which was most impugned, the Book of Common Prayer." Now that a few explanations have graciously been added to the text, "we do admonish all men that hereafter they shall not expect nor attempt any further alteration in the common and public form of God's service, from this which is now established." For we are not "ignorant of the inconveniences that do arise in government, by admitting innovation in things once settled by mature deliberation. And how necessary it is to use constancy in the upholding of the public determinations of States, for … the steadfast maintaining of things by good advice established, is the weal of all Commonwealths."

9. Frank E. Brightman, *The English Rite* (2 vols.; London: Rivingtons, 1921), 1:clxxxiii.

10. The father and brothers of Posthumus, appearing "as in an apparition," address Jupiter as "thou": "*Sicilius:* No more, thou thunder-master, show thy spite on mortal flies. … *First Brother:* Then Jupiter, thou king of gods, / Why hast thou thus adjourned / The graces for his merits due / Being all to dolours turned? … *Sicilius:* Peep through thy marble mansion: help! / Or we poor ghosts will cry … Against thy deity" (*Cymbeline* 5.4.31–92). They have presumed. "*Jupiter:* No more, you petty spirits of region low / Offend our hearing." For the use of "thou/thee" in Shakespeare, see George L. Brook, *The Language of Shakespeare* (London: Deutsch, 1976), 73–75.

11. Peter McCullough, *Sermons at Court: Politics and Religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean Preaching* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 156–58. Black letter was used too for literature aimed at unsophisticated audiences; see Charles C. Mish, "Black Letter as a Social Discriminant in the Seventeenth Century," *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* 68 (1953): 627–30.

12. Pollard, *Records*, 294, 297 (modernized).

13. Burke, *Translation*, 238.

14. Ibid.

15. In the Geneva Bible, "in the usual names little is changed for fear of troubling the simple readers" (Pollard, *Records*, 281; modernized).

16. Brook, *Language*, 33.

17. Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (2 vols.; repr., London: Dent, 1907), 5.37.2.

18. William Jacobson, *Fragmentary Illustrations of the History of the Book of Common Prayer* (London: John Murray, 1874), 47. The seventy years are the lifetime of Ps 90:10.

19. Brightman, *Rite*, ccv, 31, 33.

20. Brook, *Language*, 54–55; for other returns to terms specific to the prayer book of 1549, see Brightman, *Rite*, ccvii.

21. Brook (*Language*, 109) points out, however, that the substitution of "its" for "thereof" or "of the same" would have involved substantial recasting of sentences.

22. Edward Cardwell, A *History of Conferences and Other Proceedings Connected with the Revision of the Book of Common Prayer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1849), 362–63 (concession 3). There is a curious dislocation between the ministers' exception and the bishops' response: the ministers had asked that "the version [of the psalms] set forth and allowed to be sung in churches may be amended, or that we may have leave to make use of a purer version"; the bishops responded that "singing of psalms in metre is no part of the liturgy, and so no part of our commission" (342). The bishops refer elsewhere (339) to the Sternhold and Hopkins metrical Psalter, which was often bound with the Geneva Bible. If the bishops assumed (rightly or wrongly) that the ministers were referring to metrical psalms they were known to favor, the bishops perhaps hoped that Coverdale's familiar psalms would be a sufficiently attractive substitute. For the rest of the liturgical texts, in response to exception 8, "we are willing that all the epistles and gospels be used according to the last translation" (concession 1).

23. Brightman, *Rite*, cxcv, ccv. For the Psalter in general, see Brook, *Language*, 148–71.

24. See Brightman, *Rite*, clxxxi, for the additions of 1604. Brightman is refreshingly forthright in his assessments: see *Rite*, ccv–ccvi, ccix (and for Sanderson's language, ccxxiii) for both good and bad additions in 1661; also ccxv, ccxvii, ccxxiii, clxxxi (for bad new prayers), cxci (for Wren's suggestions).

25. Brightman, *Rite*, 197 (lightly modernized).

26. Hooker, *Laws,* 5.25.1.

27. *Laws,* 5.25.2.

28. Hooker, *Laws,* 5.34.2. He is not here discussing language, but the forms and structure of prayer to "a *great* king, who understandeth all things beforehand." In such a setting, at issue is not "the method of persuasive utterance in the presence of great men" (such as is the setting of much rhetoric), but "what doth most avail to our own edification in piety and godly zeal."

29. Peter Lake, "Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge, and Avant-Garde Conformity at the Court of James I," in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court* (ed. Linda L. Peck; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 113–33; Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke, *Altars Restored: The Changing Face of English Religious Worship, 1547–c. 1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), ch. 3.

30. McCullough, *Sermons*, 150.

31. Wilbur S. Howell (*Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500–1700* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956], 116, 81, 138) points out that Bede had illustrated all but one of his seventeen schemes and thirteen tropes in *Liber de Schematibus et Tropis* (701–2) from the Bible; Traversagni's *Nova Rhetorica* (Westminster, ca. 1479) drew from the Bible most of its examples of stylistic devices; in handbooks "each scheme and trope offered an opportunity for copious illustration from the Bible and classical

literature, with the result that all treatises on figurative language contain hundreds of model ornaments for imitation."

32. Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* (Corpus Christianorum: Series latina 32; Turnholt: Brepols, 1962), 116–67.

33. Ibid., 4.6.9; cf. 7.21.

34. Ibid., 4.6.10.

35. Just two examples: it matters to the reception of the whole ensuing text that the Gospel of John opens with a hymn, and *Proslogion* 1 with an exhortation to the reader and an invocation of God's help. The reader's consequent disposition would have been viewed by John and Anselm as a condition (I suggest) for the possibility of the text's comprehension. If a translation of either text were to obscure that character, the translation would be *theologically* inadequate.

36. This is not, of course, to claim that theological and stylistic concerns are always inseparable. Cranmer's annotations to Henry VIII's corrections of *The Institution of a Christian Man* ("The Bishops' Book") are instructive, Thomas Cranmer, *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer* (ed. John E. Cox; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846), 83–114. There are, in Cranmer's theological critique, some moments where the skills of the stylist shine through. "By his [God's] ordinate power: This word 'ordinate power' obscureth the sentence in the understanding of them that be simple and unlearned; and among the learned it gendereth contention and disputation" (84). Many of the king's additions, "methinks, come not in aptly in some places as they be brought in but rather interrupt and let the course and phrase of the paraphrasis" (86). More than one addition "obscureth the sense, and is superfluous" (86); "the preter tense may not conveniently be joined with the present tense" (86); a "sentence, as it is printed, runneth more evenly" than in the king's version (87); an addition "maketh the sentence very dark and ambiguous," by introducing a verb without a clear subject (88); another "interrupteth the phrase of speech" (89); in the use of both "cure" and "charge", there is small difference between them, "but that the one is plain English, and the other is deducted out of Latin" (94).

37. Alfred W. Pollard, *Records of the English Bible* (London: Oxford University Press, 1911), 276 (modernized).

38. There is the propriety of words to English itself; and the propriety of certain English words to the subject of Scripture. Norton (*History*, 19–26) discusses an early concern with the first: the conflict between Tyndale and More. Tyndale aspired to "more proper English"; More mocked Tyndale's failure to write either true matter or true English. As ever, biblical translation was set within larger linguistic movements: Thomas Wilson (*The Arte of Rhetorique* [1560]) mocked both those who use over-old and over-strange words, and the far-journeyed gentlemen who "at their return home, as they love to go in foreign apparel, so they will powder their talk with oversea language"; see George H. Mair, ed., *Wilson's Arte of Rhetorique* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1909), 3, 162 (modernized). Quintilian (*Institutio oratoria* 8.3.31) had objected to the search, "quod sit magis antiquum remotum inopinatum" (cf. 8.2.12).

39. Pollard, *Records*, 281.

40. We cannot explore here the larger question of Hebraisms. At our distance, the praise of English as a suitable vehicle for Hebrew modes of expression might seem to

have been primarily ideological: a new people of God surely speaks a language conformable to the Word of God.

41. "Publice legebat verba Latina in sacro volumine contenta, quae voluit pro eorum germano et nativo intellectu et rei majestate, quoad poterit vel in sua natura retineri, vel quam accommodatissime fieri possit in Anglicum sermonem verti" (Pollard, *Records*, 273); for Gardiner's list of words, see Norton, *History*, 35–36.

42. Cranmer and the evangelical establishment may already have been planning the issue of daily offices in English by 1539; see Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 223–25; the first vernacular service to be authorized was the litany in 1544 (ibid., 328).

43. Pollard, *Records*, 298 (modernized, here and below).

44. Ibid., 303.

45. Corpus Christi College, Oxford MS 312, fol. 73v: a seventeenth-century copy of a copy, made by William Fulman. See Ward Allen, *Translating for King James* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1969).

46. Allen, *Translating*, 87.

47. Andrew Downes was Bois's former tutor at Cambridge and by 1610 Regius Professor of Greek, "qui verborum est pensitator subtilissimus" (Bois in Allen, *Translating*, 53: "who is a most subtle weigher of words"). Downes could be fierce in argument: Bois records that over 1 Cor 10:11 Downes "acriber et vehementer ὑπερδιετείνετο" (in Allen, *Translating,* 47: "sharply and vehemently ὑπερδιετείνετο [exerted himself beyond measure]") for a particular interpretation. Tyndale had famously adhered to the word order of the Greek, θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος, John 1:1, in his first edition. More's criticism is clear (and well directed) but uncharacteristically respectful here: "I say not this to show that I think Tyndale meant any evil in this nor I impugn not in this point his translation so greatly, but it may be borne; but I say the other is in English better and more clear" (*The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer,* in *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More* (ed. Louis A. Schuster, Richard C. Marius, James P. Lusardi, and Richard J. Schoeck; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973], 8.1:237).

48. Robert Alter points out (331–43 in this volume) how often the KJV translators favored solemnity over the simplicity of the Hebrew.

49. Burke, *Translation*, 231–32. For *perspicuitas* see Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 8.2.1.

50. Cardwell, *History*, 308–9.

51. William Jacobson, *Fragmentary Illustrations of the Book of Common Prayer* (London: J. Murray, 1874), 43. The old version may have been by Thomas Cranmer (Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996], 331); Cranmer himself admitted, "Mine English verses lack the grace and facility that I would wish they had." The new version was probably used before the queen's coronation at the coronation of Charles I, 1626; see Brightman, *Rite*, cxcii, 989, 991.

52. Hooker, *Laws*, 5.25.1. Richard Hooker was master of the Temple Church, London, 1585–1591, the post in which I have served since 1999.

The KJV and Women: Soundings and Suggestions

Katharine Doob Sakenfeld

When I was asked to prepare this paper on the King James Version and women, I initially declined because it was not at all an area of my research. Eventually the organizers of this symposium persuaded me to dig around. Since scholarly reporting and discussion of the origins and afterlife of the KJV has been overwhelmingly focused on the role of men in that story, I tried to approach my assignment from a wide range of angles. As I began to identify topics relating to women that might bear fruit, it quickly became evident that most of these areas should better be investigated by scholars whose expertise lies in British or American religious or cultural history, or by a scholar specializing in biblical reception history who would choose to work collaboratively with historians of this period. Thus, for this paper, I will present five "soundings," suggestions for promising areas of inquiry emerging from my explorations.

Before turning to these soundings, I should call attention to the 1990 work of Ilona N. Rashkow that does approach an aspect of our topic in some depth.[1] Rashkow explores the translations and marginal notes of English Bibles from Coverdale to the KJV, focusing on "the translators' anti-Semitism and the strong anti-female leanings of the time,"[2] as seen in case studies of Adam and Eve, the story of Dinah (Gen 34), and the book of Ruth. In treating each of these narratives, Rashkow focuses on points where the Hebrew words have, by her analysis, different connotations from those conveyed by the English word choices in the various Renaissance translations. Some of these divergences are attributed by Rashkow to the translators' inclination to connect the stories to New Testament traditions, some seem based in anti-Judaism or in stereotypes of women. For example, she finds that Ruth is characterized in these translations as "meek and obedient" rather than as the strong and assertive woman visible in her own interpretation of the vocabulary of the Hebrew

text.[3] Throughout, Rashkow is careful to say that she is not arguing that the Renaissance translations are "incorrect,"[4] thus suggesting that her own readings are not necessarily "correct." To my ear, Rashkow's analysis of Hebrew words and phrases lacks sufficient attention to her own late-twentieth-century cultural context of feminist ferment, and thus takes on the very "timeless" quality that she seeks to disavow, implicitly undercutting her claim for neutral evaluation of the early English translations.[5] Nonetheless, the assumption that cultural context is foundational for much of what anyone might discover about the KJV and women is at work in my soundings as well.

Sounding One: The Rationale for Forbidding Annotations in the KJV

Among Richard Bancroft's Translation Rules for the KJV panel was number 6: "No Marginal Notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek Words, which cannot without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly be expressed in the Text."[6] Of the fifteen guidelines promulgated by Bancroft and approved by King James, this sixth one stands out as the primary one actually specified in the text of the resolution for the translation made at the Hampton Court Conference: "*A translation be made of the whole Bible, as consonant as can be to the original Hebrew and Greek; and this to be set out and printed, without any marginal notes, and only to be used in all churches of England in time of divine service.*"[7] William Barlow's account of the conference indicates that the king was not fond of the Geneva Bible favored by the Puritans, particularly because of its marginal notes, some of which, according to Barlow, the king regarded as "very partial, untrue, seditious, and savoring too much of dangerous and traitorous conceits."[8] And certainly Bancroft, the leading spokesman for the Anglican side in the Hampton Court conference, did not like the Geneva translation.

For the purpose of our topic, the KJV and women, my focus is on what in particular about the Geneva notes King James did not like. Barlow's summation continues by reporting the king's particular objection to the Geneva notes on just two specific texts, both in the Old Testament, and intriguingly, both concerning women: "As for example, Exod. 1:19 where the marginal note alloweth disobedience to Kings. And 2 Chron. 15:16. The note taxeth Asa for deposing his mother, only, and not killing her."[9] I turn now to a closer look at each of these examples.

The Geneva translation of 2 Chr 15:16 reads, "And King Asa deposed Maachah his mother from her regency, because she had made an idol in a grove."[10] The KJV reads differently, but with the same substance: "And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being Queen, because she had made an idol in a grove." The note in Geneva reads: "and herein he [King Asa] showed that he lacked zeal: for she ought to have died both by covenant as in verse 13 and by the Law of God: but he gave place to foolish pity, and would also seem after a sort to falsify the Law." In other words, the Geneva note suggests (as Barlow had summarized) that the Judean king should have executed his mother, rather than merely removing her from her position within the court. Pity for her wrongly overcame zeal for obedience to God's command that an idol worshipper should be put to death. The note refers to the preceding verse, 15:13, which certainly seems to support the view that Queen Maacah should have been executed: "And whosoever will not seek the Lord God of Israel, shall be slain, whether he were small or great, man or woman" (Geneva; substantively the same in KJV). On this verse Geneva supplies a further reinforcing note: "These were the words of their covenant, which commanded all idolaters to be put to death according to the law of God, Deut 13." Clearly the note about Maacah is coordinated with this preceding one.[11]

Why may the Chronicles note have caught James's attention? It seems likely that the saga of his own mother (Mary Queen of Scots) and particularly her trial and execution, which Elizabeth supposedly tried to circumvent because of concern about its impact on the divine right of kings, was in play here. Since James himself had written on the divine right of kings (the king/queen not being subject to the will of his people, or even of the church), his attention and displeasure might readily fall upon this note expressing the view that a royal figure should be executed for religious error.[12] James's attitude toward his mother is revealed in his bringing her body to be reburied in a tomb in Westminster Abbey, a tomb more elaborate than the one James ordered to be constructed at the same time for his predecessor Elizabeth, under whom Mary's execution had taken place. The inscription on Mary's tomb certainly suggests that James believed that his mother had been wrongly executed.[13]

The second Geneva note that caught James's attention addresses a more familiar passage, the story in Exod 1 of the two midwives Shiphrah and Puah who did not kill Hebrew male newborns in accord with the Pharaoh's decree. When summoned to the pharaoh to explain why they had

let the babies live, the midwives answered, "Because the Hebrew women *are* not as the women of Egypt: for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come at them" (Exod 1:19 Geneva; similarly KJV: "and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them"). The Geneva note here indicates simply that "their disobedience herein was lawful, but their dissembling evil."

Commentators from early times reflected on how to assess the midwives' lie. That they lied is clear from verse 17, which indicates that they "did not do as the King of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive." (To save the baby boys indicates their presence at the births.) And yet the subsequent verses indicate that "they feared God" and that "God dealt well with the midwives" (vv. 20–21). For King James, we may presume that there was no problem with declaring their lie "evil"; but the bald statement that "their disobedience herein was lawful" must have sounded like a challenge to royal authority. Never mind that it was the oppressive, foreign pharaoh whose command was disobeyed; the midwives' disobedience ought at least to have been declared unlawful, even if the biblical text indicated God's approval. The balance between fearing God and disobeying royal authority was apparently not sufficiently nuanced for James's comfort.

Are there other notes concerning women in the Geneva Bible tradition that might be taken to challenge royal authority as James understood it? It would be a long hypothetical search to identify other notes on this theme that James might have mentioned but did not. Geneva has no notes on Vashti's disobedience of King Ahasuaerus (Esth 1) or on Rahab's disobedient lie to the king of Jericho (Josh 2),[14] so these additional examples of female disobedience provide no help. Nonetheless, it does strike me as noteworthy that both of the two examples to which James drew specific attention involved women, although there were other texts not involving women that raised the same issue.

Sounding Two: Examples of "First Wave" or Protofeminist Women Posing Challenges to Gendered Aspects of the KJV Translation

In sounding two I offer brief observations about nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century women's protofeminist responses to the KJV as translation. My examples are developed from primary resources already excerpted and discussed by other scholars. Although numerous women

in that era commented on biblical texts (see sounding five), and many even knew Greek and/or Hebrew, it appears that relatively few of them addressed translation issues directly.[15]

One frequently cited example is Sarah Grimké's 1837 discussion of Genesis and the equality of women. There Grimké, who had studied Hebrew, addresses the KJV translation of the last phrase of Gen 3:16: "and he [i.e., the husband] shall rule over thee." She observes, "The Hebrew, like the French language, uses the same word to express shall and will. Our translators having been accustomed to exercise their lordship over their wives, and seeing only through the medium of a perverted judgment, very naturally, though I think not very learnedly or very kindly, translated it shall instead of will, and thus converted a prediction to Eve into a command to Adam; for observe, it is addressed to the woman and not to the man."[16]

Of course modern feminist commentators on this verse have continued to discuss whether the text was originally intended (if one can assess "original intent" at all) to prescribe husband-wife relationships or simply to describe those relationships as assumed and experienced in biblical Israel. A review of several late-twentieth-century English translations/revisions reveals that the NRSV still preserves the KJV's "he shall rule over you," as do also the NJKV and ESV. The NIV and NLT, however, two translations typically associated with conservative evangelical traditions, read "he will rule over you." I note that these last two, the NIV and the NLT, present themselves as translations not dependent on the KJV tradition. One would wish to have access to transcripts or summaries of the conversations around these decisions among all five of the translating groups, in the unlikely case that such records exist. Did the questions raised by Grimké arise, or were the choices made on the basis of following KJV versus sounding more like "contemporary" English in which the "shall/will" distinction is eroding? Or was there no substantive discussion at all?

Another challenger to KJV wording from a woman's perspective might be Julia Evelina Smith, whose own translation of the Bible was published in 1876 (when Smith was 83 years old). Smith, schooled in Greek and self-educated in Biblical Hebrew, prepared the translation for her own interest in the 1850s and finally published it to demonstrate publicly the intellectual capacity of women as she engaged in a years-long dispute with local Connecticut authorities over taxation of her farm property. Was Smith's purpose at least in part to correct the KJV translators' renderings of texts about women? Modern reviewers and biographers have disagreed

over whether Smith's work reflects a concern for what we would today call gender bias in Bible translation,[17] with the most specific proposal supporting such a view coming from Marla Selvidge. Selvidge offers a sample of seven Old Testament and seven New Testament verses in which she views Smith's changes from the KJV to show that Smith "did intentionally translate the Bible in order to change the traditionally accepted subordinate views about women."[18] While it is conceivable that Smith noted these differences, my review of Selvidge's examples suggests that they were fundamentally generated by Smith's stated intent to translate the Bible as absolutely literally as possible.[19] For example, when Smith translated Gen 16:2 as "And Abram will listen to the voice of Sarai," Selvidge proposes that Smith intended this to mean that "Sarah will be in control [of Abraham] permanently."[20] But Smith consistently used English future tense (rather than past tense) to translate the Hebrew imperfect preceded by the so-called *waw* consecutive; therefore, I would not attribute any particular feminist intent to Smith's tense selection here.[21]

To conclude this discussion of Julia Smith, a few comments are in order concerning *The Woman's Bible* prepared under the leadership of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and published in 1898. Stanton and her women's "Revising Committee" focused mainly on interpreting the text, not on translation. Yet Stanton and others were clearly aware of Smith's translation and were unhappy that Smith was not invited to join the committee that prepared a revision of the KJV. (Smith's lack of advanced formal education and overly literal translation may have been factors; I have found no mention of any specific decision not to include her. Smith had not yet published her translation when the American revising committee began its work in 1872.) *The Woman's Bible* included at the end of its section on the Pentateuch an appendix by contributor Frances Ellen Burr giving a brief biography of the "distinguished scholar" Julia Smith, to whose translation Burr says *The Woman's Bible* contributors refer "as their ultimate authority for the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew Text."[22] Thus whatever Smith's own intent in preparing her translation, it may have been used in the following decade as a basis for early feminist challenges to KJV wording. Nonetheless, the texts discussed in *The Woman's Bible* are given in the KJV translation at the head of each section, with only rare references to Smith's variants in commentary portions when Smith's wording supports the commentator's interpretation, as in various phrases in Gen 3, including changing the name "Eve" to "Life."[23] With this one exception, none of Selvidge's examples appears in *The Woman's Bible*. Further research into

the writings of contributors to *The Woman's Bible* and comparison with Smith's work might be done to discover Smith's actual influence among early feminist biblical interpreters.

Several first-wave feminists used their knowledge of Greek to challenge the KJV wording of New Testament texts used to oppose women in church leadership. Elizabeth Carter (1717–1806)[24] and Antoinette Brown Blackwell (1825–1921)[25] commented on 1 Cor 14:34–35 and 1 Tim 2. Lucy (Rider) Meyer (1849–1922) mounted Greek-based arguments that Phoebe was a deaconess, thus challenging the KJV of Rom 16:1, and proposed new translations of multiple verses in 1 Timothy in support of deaconesses.[26]

More wide-ranging was the work of Katharine C. Bushnell (1855–1946), who published *God's Word to Women: One Hundred Bible Studies on Woman's Place in the Divine Economy* in serial form from 1908 to 1916. The set was bound into a substantial single volume in 1921, reprinted in 1946, and again in 2005. Bushnell's work spans the breadth of the canon, using both Greek and Hebrew to challenge point after point of traditional interpretation. Of unusual interest are lessons 77–79, entitled "Sex Bias Influences Translators." Here Bushnell adduces numerous instances where the KJV and/or RV persistently translate specific Hebrew or Greek words in a different way when they relate to female subjects (e.g., "virtuous" for Hebrew *ḥayil*, instead of "valiant, able, or strong").[27] Bushnell's work forms the basis for the contemporary website www.godswordtowomen.org, often used by women in evangelical traditions arguing for equality rather than complementarity.[28]

Sounding Three: Junia

Eldon Jay Epp has provided the scholarly world with a superb textual analysis of the apostle Paul's greeting to "Junia … of note among the Apostles" (Rom 16:7 KJV) and how this woman apostle became the male "Junias" in subsequent translations,[29] a tradition so strong that even those late-twentieth-century translations that have reverted to "Junia" often include a footnote for the alternative male proper name.[30] Recent conservative translations that adopt "Junia" have changed their translation of the modifying phrase so that she and Andronicus are not themselves apostles but are only well known to the apostles.[31]

My purpose here is not to rehearse Epp's detailed and compelling arguments for the correctness of the KJV at this verse, but rather to draw wider attention to his work, and to underscore that the KJV translators,

who certainly had never heard of "feminist analysis," got it right in following the tradition of the female name "Junia" in earlier English Bibles, which in turn reflect the long history of Greek manuscripts and the church fathers. Only in the 1880s did the male name "Junias" begin to appear in English translations, notably in the 1881 Revised Version (of the KJV); "Junias" then dominated English translations for nearly a hundred years.

Even as feminist interpreters from the nineteenth century onward suggested translation and interpretive changes supportive of women in church leadership, Epp shows us that, conversely, certain male translators (and the text critics supporting their work) made their decisions based on the interpretive assumption that women could not have been in positions of leadership in the earliest church. Epp's work leads to the question: Are there other such cases where text critics and historians might work together to uncover comparable biases in the afterlife of the KJV?

Sounding Four: Chapter Summaries in the KJV

The prohibition of interpretive marginal comments in the 1611 KJV translation did not completely eliminate the possibility of interpretive suggestion by those who prepared the translation, since there were both running page heads, indicating the subject matter of the text, and individual chapter headings giving more detailed phrases summarizing the chapter contents. A review of these summaries for chapters of particular interest regarding women may reveal the perspectives of the men who prepared them. Again, a more detailed study could be undertaken; here are a few examples by way of suggestion from the 1611 edition, in which the summaries were often but not always indebted to Geneva.[32]

At Genesis 34, the story of Dinah, the KJV chapter summary begins with "Dinah is ravished by Shechem." Here the heading unflinchingly reflects Shechem's culpability, rather than highlighting Dinah's presumed (ir)responsibility in going out of the Israelite camp, as did many interpreters of this story. In this example, the wording of KJV simply expands Geneva's "Dinah is ravished."[33]

By contrast, however, the respective summaries in KJV and Geneva differ at Gen 38, the story of Judah and Tamar. Geneva highlights verse 18, "Judah lyeth with his daughter-in-law Tamar," while KJV focuses on verse 13, "she [Tamar] deceiveth Judah." The selection of one verse over the other seems to move the emphasis on culpability from Judah in Geneva to Tamar in the KJV. Remarkably, both sets of chapter heads

then move immediately to "the birth of Perez and Zerah"; neither makes any mention at all of the discovery of Tamar's pregnancy or of Judah's recognition that "she hath been more righteous than I" (v. 26), a verse and theme of special interest to modern interpreters of women in the Old Testament.

In Ezek 16 and 23 the prophet uses highly graphic sexual imagery in depicting Jerusalem as a woman who has spurned God her husband. Here Geneva's chapter summaries actually give no clue about the specific imagery, describing the entire central section of 16:15–45 only as "their unkindness."[34] KJV uses "the unkindness" in its running page head but is more concrete in describing verses 15ff. in chapter heading as "her monstrous whoredom." Again, in chapter 23, KJV chapter headings include the words "whoredoms," "lovers," and "adulteries," whereas Geneva uses only "idolatries," focusing on the meaning of the imagery rather than its content. Even if we cannot know what led to these rather different choices, we may see long ago hints of the ongoing discomfort that contemporary women and men experience with such imagery.[35]

I conclude this section by noting just one example from the New Testament. In its 1 Cor 14 chapter headings KJV follows Geneva in highlighting verse 34 with the phrase "Women are forbidden to speak in the Church." There is of course no disagreement about this summary as expression of the surface content of verse 34, "Let your women keep silent in the Churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak." Conspicuously, however, this verse about women's place is selected for mention, while the immediately preceding verses on proper behavior in the cases of tongues or prophecies are completely omitted from the headings in both KJV and Geneva. A historian of sixteenth/seventeenth-century Christianity might consider which of these issues was more lively in the churches at that time, or whether this selection simply represents a holdover from persistent older tradition.

Sounding Five: Unofficial KJV Editions and Their Relevance for Women

My first sounding addressed the prohibition of marginal notes in the KJV. In my final sounding, I return to the theme of marginal notes. Although the Hampton Court rule for preparation of the KJV prohibited any marginal comments beyond the necessary clarification of Greek and Hebrew terms, by a century after the original publication, editions of the KJV with

notes and other variations from standard printing began to appear in considerable numbers.

Mary Wilson Carpenter's research has uncovered some eighty so-called Family Bible versions published in Great Britain from the 1730s through the 1880s, and similar editions appeared in North America as well. These editions were often serialized, perhaps initially as a way for publishers to circumvent the restriction of the KJV licensing to certain royal publishers and simultaneously to develop a commercial market for the KJV in individual homes. These Family Bibles regularly included notes and illustrations (despite the prohibition of notes in the licensed printers' editions).[36] Carpenter identifies several stages in the development of the British editions over this one-hundred-fifty-year period, analyzing them from a Foucaultian perspective of their implicit construction of sex, gender, and family. Of particular interest is the movement beginning around 1820 to identify passages that should be read only in "Closet" by the head of household, but not shared in family Bible reading with the women, children, and servants. Such passages were printed in smaller type, or signaled by brackets, or even omitted completely in editions meant for readers such as common laborers in need of such "protection." Carpenter does not provide a comprehensive list of such passages, but describes topics such as "narratives of sexual deviance or violence, [or] the highly explicit laws concerning the body in the Book of Leviticus."[37]

Here I turn to Taylor and Weir's compendium of nineteenth-century British and American women writing about women in Genesis, a major but only initial foray into the huge task of locating primary sources by women. It is reasonable to assume that most of the selections by Christian authors in the Taylor-Weir collection are based on the KJV (with RV possibly used by some at the very end of the nineteenth century).[38] Taylor and Weir note that a number of the women excerpted in their volume were well educated, had studied Greek and/or Hebrew, and were aware of contemporary critical study of the Bible.[39] But as suggested in sounding two, women writers, even protofeminist writers, seem to focus mainly on interpreting the text, not on translation as such or on questioning any details of the KJV wording. In a cursory review of the relatively few places in which the authors in the Taylor-Weir compendium quoted the biblical text, I found only one example that was not an exact citation of the KJV.

It would be of interest, if it were possible, to know what editions of the KJV may have been used by these and other nineteenth-century women. In at least two cases, the excerpted authors allude to the commentaries of

Matthew Henry,[40] and while Henry's work may have been generally available, it is noteworthy that selections from Henry were included at least from 1800 onward in a significant number of the Family Bible editions reviewed by Carpenter. Are there other clues that could be coordinated between the projects of Carpenter, Taylor and Weir, and others who are recovering writings of early British and American women, to suggest use of particular Family Bibles by individual women authors?

Taylor and Weir also note that their nineteenth-century women writing on Genesis rarely give attention to narratives such as the rape of Dinah (Gen 34) or Tamar and Judah (Gen 38).[41] Were these passages bracketed in Family Bible editions Carpenter studied? Might these women authors have used such KJV editions? Or were these women authors simply reflecting the same Victorian cultural sensibilities that led to bracketing of such texts, and thus considering their own audiences in a similar perspective? What other possibilities may emerge as the recovery of women's biblical interpretation moves beyond Genesis, and as more analysis is done of Family Bibles published in Britain and America?

The publication of annotated KJV editions certainly continued in America beyond the decline of the Family Bible tradition.[42] In our own time, however, despite publishers' emphasis on study Bibles related to many different English translations, annotated editions of the KJV are surprisingly rare. I have found only two, both of which seem dedicated to upholding particular conservative Christian perspectives, including biblical inerrancy, literal creation, and, in a rough sampling, traditional views of women.[43] (Note, however, that there are various study Bibles for the NKJV, and different ones present substantially differing viewpoints on key women characters in the Bible.) Here I would invite an investigator with social science skills to enter the arena of KJV studies. Who is purchasing and using these contemporary annotated KJV editions? Are the traditional views of women reflected in these study editions any more represented within congregations that use an annotated KJV than among those who use the unannotated KJV or the ESV or NLT or other "conservative/evangelical" translations? And why are annotated editions of the KJV now so rare? Why is there so little market? (Surely publishers would produce annotated editions if they could sell them in the still huge KJV market.) Is there explicit or unspoken theological resistance (whether theological or cultural) to the use of annotated Bibles among contemporary users of the KJV? Are there significant differences on these questions between African American congregations and white congre-

gations? Are there gender differences around these questions? There is much here to explore.

Conclusion

The five soundings offered here only scratch the surface of possibilities concerning the KJV and women. Other widely divergent areas of inquiry on my list were left unpursued.[44] It is my hope that the suggestions concerning at least some these five topics, ranging from research on aspects of the 1611 KJV edition itself, to its Geneva background and its afterlife in the hands of women readers, will find their way into the ongoing research of other scholars.

Notes

1. Ilona N. Rashkow, *Upon the Dark Places: Anti-Semitism and Sexism in English Renaissance Biblical Translation* (Bible and Literature Series 28; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990). Rashkow often uses marginal notes in the various Renaissance Bibles to support her interpretation of the bias she finds underlying the translators' word choices. Thus her study gives proportionally less attention to the KJV (lacking marginal notes) than to other versions.

2. Ibid., 11.

3. Ibid., 150.

4. E.g., ibid., 154.

5. There are also instances in which she may misread or overread the Renaissance sources. For examples, see J. A. Emerton's lengthy review of Rashkow, *Upon the Dark Places,* in *Vetus Testamentum* 45 (1995): 409–14.

6. As cited in Alister E. McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 174.

7. As cited in ibid., 163–64.

8. William Barlow, William T. Costello, and Charles Keenan, *The Summe and Substance of the Conference Which It Pleased His Excellent Majestie to Have with the Lords, Bishops, and Other of His Clergie … at Hampton Court, January 14, 1604, a Facsimile Reproduction with Introduction* (Gainesville, Fla.: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1965), 47.

9. Ibid.

10. All Geneva translations and notes are cited from the 1599 edition; comparison to 1560 and 1594 editions shows no differences in the quotations cited in this paper. The KJV is cited from a 1611 edition. In all citations spellings have been updated.

11. Geneva's note on Maacah on the parallel passage in 1 Kgs 15:13 differs from the one in Chronicles. The Kings note reads: "Neither kindred nor authority ought to be regarded when they blaspheme God, and become idolatrous, but must be pun-

ished," thus simply affirming the punishment of Queen Maacah without asserting that she should have been executed. This difference in the Geneva notes may suggest that different annotators were at work for different biblical books, a topic for exploration within scholarship about the Geneva tradition.

12. Alister McGrath has looked more broadly at divine right of kings as a basis for James's opposition to Geneva. See McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 141–48. McGrath discusses Geneva notes on Dan 6:22, 11:36, and Ps 105:15 as other examples of challenge to royal authority.

13. See, for example, this phrase: having "courageously and vigorously, (but vainly), fought against the obloquies of her foes, the mistrust of the faint-hearted, and the crafty devices of her mortal enemies, she was at last struck down by the axe (an unheard-of precedent, outrageous to royalty)." English translation of the Latin available in "Mary Queen of Scots." Online: http://www.westminster-abbey.org/our-history/royals/burials/mary-queen-of-scots.

14. A study focused on the Geneva notes might explore why this is so.

15. Such protofeminist commentary certainly began before the nineteenth century. In seventeenth-century Britain, for example, Rachel Speght and Margaret Fell were well known for their challenges to traditional interpretations of biblical texts concerning women. Their key writings, do not, however, argue from biblical languages to object to the wording of the KJV. See Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Feminist Consciousness from the Middle Ages to Eighteen-seventy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), esp. 138–66.

16. Sarah Moore Grimké, "The Original Equality of Woman," in *Let Her Speak for Herself: Nineteenth-century Women Writing on Women in Genesis* (ed. Marion Ann Taylor and Heather E. Weir: Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2006), 45. See also Marla J. Selvidge, *Notorious Voices: Feminist Biblical Interpretation, 1500–1920* (New York: Continuum, 1996), 44–54.

17. Smith did not make such an explicit claim. See examples of differing perspectives on her work in the biography by Susan J. Shaw, *A Religious History of Julia Evelina Smith's 1876 Translation of the Holy Bible: Doing More Than Any Man Has Ever Done* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1993), 168. Shaw sides with those who do not see gender bias as part of Smith's explicit concern.

18. Selvidge, *Notorious Voices*, 224.

19. The possible exception to this generalization would be Smith's rendering of 1 Tim 2:11–12, where she translates "in freedom from care" for KJV's "in silence," and also changes "I suffer [i.e., permit] not" to "I trust not," and "usurp authority" to "exercise authority." In each case, she selects another standard dictionary meaning for the Greek word in question and so could claim a literal translation; but, as Selvidge notes, the overall effect is rather less negative toward women (ibid.).

20. Ibid., 220.

21. Selvidge is aware of this feature of Smith's translation technique (ibid., 224 n. 23) but still attributes anti-KJV feminist significance to this single case.

A possible exception to Smith's extremely literal translation within Selvidge's examples is Gen 7:2, instructions to Noah concerning animals to be taken into the ark, where Smith's translation, "thou shalt take to thee seven; seven male and female," does

indeed omit the possessive pronoun suffix that is present in the Hebrew and expressed as "his female" in the KJV. Selvidge proposes that this omission indicates "that Julia does not assume that the female is a mate of any other male. There is no matching or subordination" (*Notorious Voices*, 220). However, there exist Hebrew manuscripts with alternate readings of this phrase that would support Smith's translation. Unfortunately we do not have clear knowledge of whether she knew of these variants; it is known that she had access to many scholarly books on the Old Testament.

22. Reprint of *The Woman's Bible* (Seattle: Coalition Task Force on Women and Religion, 1974), 149.

23. Ibid., 26–27. Even here, there is not explicit reference to "Life" as a proposal from Smith's work.

24. See Natasha Duquette, "Carter, Elizabeth," in *Handbook of Women Biblical Interpreters: A Historical and Biographical Guide* (ed. Marion Ann Taylor: Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 105–9.

25. See Beth Bidlack, "Antoinette Brown Blackwell: Pioneering Exegete and Congregational Minister," in *Strangely Familiar: Protofeminist Interpretations of Patriarchal Biblical Texts* (ed. Nancy Calvert-Koyzis and Heather R. Weir: Leiden: Brill, 2009), 160–65.

26. See Agnes Choi, "From the Mediterranean to America: Lucy Meyer's Biblical Interpretation and the Deaconess Movement," in Calvert-Koyzis and Weir, *Strangely Familiar*, 236–41.

27. Katharine C. Bushnell, *God's Word to Women: One Hundred Bible Studies on Women's Place in the Divine Economy* (1923; repr., North Collins, N.Y.: Ray B. Munson, 1946), paragraphs 616–44 (no pagination). Bushnell sums up this example: "This Hebrew word, *cha-yil*, used over 200 times in the Hebrew Bible, signifies 'force,' 'strength,' 'ability.' But in every instance where it relates to *women*, and nowhere else, it is translated 'virtue,'—i.e., chastity" (paragraph 633).

28. A few years after Bushnell's work, Lee Anna Starr published *The Bible Status of Woman* (New York: Revell, 1926), a work of more than four hundred printed pages commenting on a wide range of biblical texts and occasionally challenging KJV wording.

29. Bushnell addressed this issue nearly one hundred years earlier, anticipating Epp's arguments concerning the view of Chrysostom and the absence of the male name in Classical Greek (*God's Word to Women*, paragraphs 642–43). Bushnell did not, however, develop the text-critical and grammatical aspects that are so important to Epp's analysis.

30. Eldon Jay Epp, *Junia: The First Woman Apostle* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005). "Junia" with footnote to "Junias" as alternative reading appears inter alia in REB, NRSV, and NLT. See Epp's table 3, *Junia,* 66.

31. So, for example, ESV, Holman Christian Standard Bible. See discussion of current conservative perspective in Denny Burke et al., "An Evaluation of Gender Inclusive Language in the 2011 Edition of the NIV Bible." Online: http://www.cbmw.org/Resources/Articles/An-Evaluation-of-Gender-Language-in-the.

32. The KJV was certainly not the first to include chapter summaries, as such summaries appeared in Coverdale, Matthew, the Great Bible, and Geneva. J. Isaacs

states that the King James headings "pay very great respect" to those of Geneva ("The Authorized Version and After," in *The Bible in Its Ancient and English Versions* [ed. H. Wheeler Robinson: Oxford: Clarendon, 1940], 207).

33. Rashkow deals with Dinah in some detail, observing that despite this brief heading, marginal notes in Geneva and also in Tyndale and Douay-Rheims do place blame on Dinah (*Upon the Dark* Places, 97–101). Thus one should not too easily assume that the KJV translators had a different view; the lack of marginal notes denies us access to their perspective, even while opening the door to a different view of Dinah.

34. Here "unkindness" appears to be used in its obsolete sense of "unnatural conduct; absence of natural affection or consideration for others." See *Oxford English Dictionary,* s.v. "unkindness, n." See also Middle English definition 1b, "a lack of natural affection for or loyalty to a spouse or lover … also, an act of betrayal of a spouse or lover, unfaithfulness, desertion." See *Middle English Dictionary,* s.v. "unkindness (n.)." Online: http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED49025&egs=all&egdisplay=compact.

35. A sampling of chapter heads in modern translations reveals attention to specific content but a softening of terminology, with expressions such as "unfaithful bride" or "two adulterous sisters."

36. Mary Wilson Carpenter, *Imperial Bibles, Domestic Bodies: Women, Sexuality, and Religion in the Victorian Market* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003). I should note that the cataloguing topic headings for this volume (suggested on the copyright page) are such that the connection between the KJV and women is obscured.

37. Ibid., 36. Also bracketed were Old Testament genealogies and materials steeped in ancient cultural values of the Israelite world.

38. Paul C. Gutjahr catalogues other translations that appeared in North America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but it seems that only one, in the Campbellite tradition, gained significant circulation (*An American Bible: A History of the Good Book in the United States 1777–1880* [Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999], 89–111, 193–94). It is less clear what translation the Jewish women authors included in the Taylor-Weir collection may have been using; some clearly were working directly from Hebrew. For possibilities available at that time, see Leonard J. Greenspoon, "The King James Bible and Jewish Bible Translations," in *Translation That Openeth the Window: Reflections on the History and Legacy of the King James Bible* (ed. David G. Burke; Society of Biblical Literature Biblical Scholarship in North America 23; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 123–38, esp. 130–32.

39. Taylor and Weir, *Let Her Speak for Herself*, 450.

40. Esther Hewlett Copley in 1833 (ibid., 34); Etty Woosnam in 1881 (ibid., 167), both writing in England.

41. Even *The Woman's Bible*, which was intended to cover passages directly relating to women, does not include comment on these two stories.

42. In 1896, for example, Oxford University Press published a standard KJV translation (as was now typical, without Apocrypha), complete with the preface to King James and chapter headings. In the center column of each page appear Bishop Ussher's dates (starting 4004 BC), while in the back are extensive "Illustrations and Helps" totaling in length almost one-third of the pages of the volume. Going far beyond topics

such as canon, miracles, chronology, geography, and botany included in earlier Family Bibles, this edition incorporates an astonishing range of material, including facsimiles of the Rosetta and Moabite stones, photographs of Amarna letters, Shalmaneser's black obelisk, and other ancient Near Eastern artifacts, as well as facsimiles of biblical manuscripts in nine languages, including Arabic and Ethiopic. Many annotated Bibles used new knowledge of the ancient Near East in support of traditional rather than newer scholarly interpretations of the Bible, and a brief unsigned article in this 1896 edition in fact makes claims for the historical reliability of the Bible. Nonetheless, I still find it remarkable that Bishop Ussher's dates and materials from the most up-to-date academic scholarship of the 1890s appear within a single KJV edition.

43. *Life in the Spirit Study Bible: King James Version* (ed. Donald C. Stamps: Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003); *The King James Study Bible* (Nashville: Nelson, 1993), previously published as the Liberty Annotated Study Bible and as The Annotated Study Bible, King James Version (1988).

44. Three examples: What can be known of the female family members of the 1611 translators? How might the criteria and implicit rationale for Bancroft's guidelines for the KJV be compared and contrasted to the rationale and criteria for accurate Bible translation set forth by the conservative twenty-first-century Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood? Is it the case (or not) that the KJV Only movement is of interest mainly to conservative male Christians, with the exception of its one highly idiosyncratic female spokesperson, Gail Riplinger, or do women find reason to have an interest in this movement?

John Speed's "Canaan" and British Travel to Palestine: A Journey with Maps

Joan Taylor

The Bible can create a peculiar dissonance for Christians who read it as a sacred story illuminating the relationship between God and humanity. It is not of our age. It may be prefaced, at the very beginning, with something similar to the *Star Wars* film series: "A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away." Or slightly more poetically one thinks of Bob Dylan's song "Long Ago, Far Away" (1962):

> To preach of peace and brotherhood
> Oh, what might be the cost!
> A man he did it long ago
> And they hung him on a cross
> Long ago, far away
> These things don't happen
> No more, nowadays.

Yet, while the biblical story is set long ago and far away, it is something read as relevant for today, and likewise the actual place where it happened still exists. That place is "out there" in the world just as much today as it was in the distant past. It is not an imaginary entity. "Long ago" and "out there" exist in a strained union, hence the dissonance.

Ever since the emperor Constantine sought to create a sacred geography in Palestine and developed a concept of the Holy Land in the first part of the fourth century, by means of four magnificent basilicas that would organize pilgrimages for Christians,[1] multitudes of Christians fired by the power of the sacred story of the past traveled to the place where it all happened, carrying with them a sense of geography based on that

story. For pilgrims, even now, the place "out there" is encountered and compared with the geography as it exists already in their minds, founded on the story as told in Scripture. A spatial sense was important even at the time of Constantine's innovations: already in Eusebius's *Onomasticon*, a pre-Constantinian work that listed all the sites mentioned in Scripture, there was originally a map (no longer extant) of the allotments of the twelve tribes.[2]

Readers of the King James Version of the Bible (KJV) have likewise been aided by useful maps from the beginning to the present day. We are quite used to knowing the Bible not only through the text but through accompanying pictures. My childhood edition, illustrated by E. S. Hardy,[3] has four maps at the back: "The Ancient World," "Palestine as Divided among the Tribes of Israel," "Palestine in the Time of Christ," and "The Eastern Mediterranean World in the First Century A.D."

The first readers of the KJV were helped by a map by John Speed, a cartographer who received a license patent from the crown for ten years, from October 30, 1610, to print and insert it into the book,[4] the privilege being extended in 1617 for a further seven years.[5] The first edition of the KJV published by Robert Barker in 1611 contained a folio edition of Speed's engraved map entitled "Canaan," and this work continued to be included, printed from one of two metal plates in folio-sized forms, over many years (see fig. 1). In the many quarto editions of the KJV there was a simplified woodblock version of the map [not shown here]* spread over two pages. This can be found in editions through to the 1630s.

Speed's "Canaan" was in fact part of an apparatus that was an essential feature of the version of the Bible authorized by King James. It is usually called the "Genealogies," fully: "Genealogies recorded in the Sacred Scriptures according to every Family and Tribe, with the line of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, observed from Adam to the Blessed Virgin Mary."[6] This was not done for the KJV. It had already found a home in the Geneva Bible, also published by Robert Barker—"Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majestie." It appeared there immediately before Barker published the Authorized Version. The "Genealogies" in toto was an insert of between 34 and 40 pages of woodcut charts, and included a work of historical geography entitled "A Description of Canaan, and the bordering Countries," and the accompanying map.[7]

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* Editors' note: Due to space limitations, we regret that we cannot reproduce every map that the author included in the presentation of her paper.

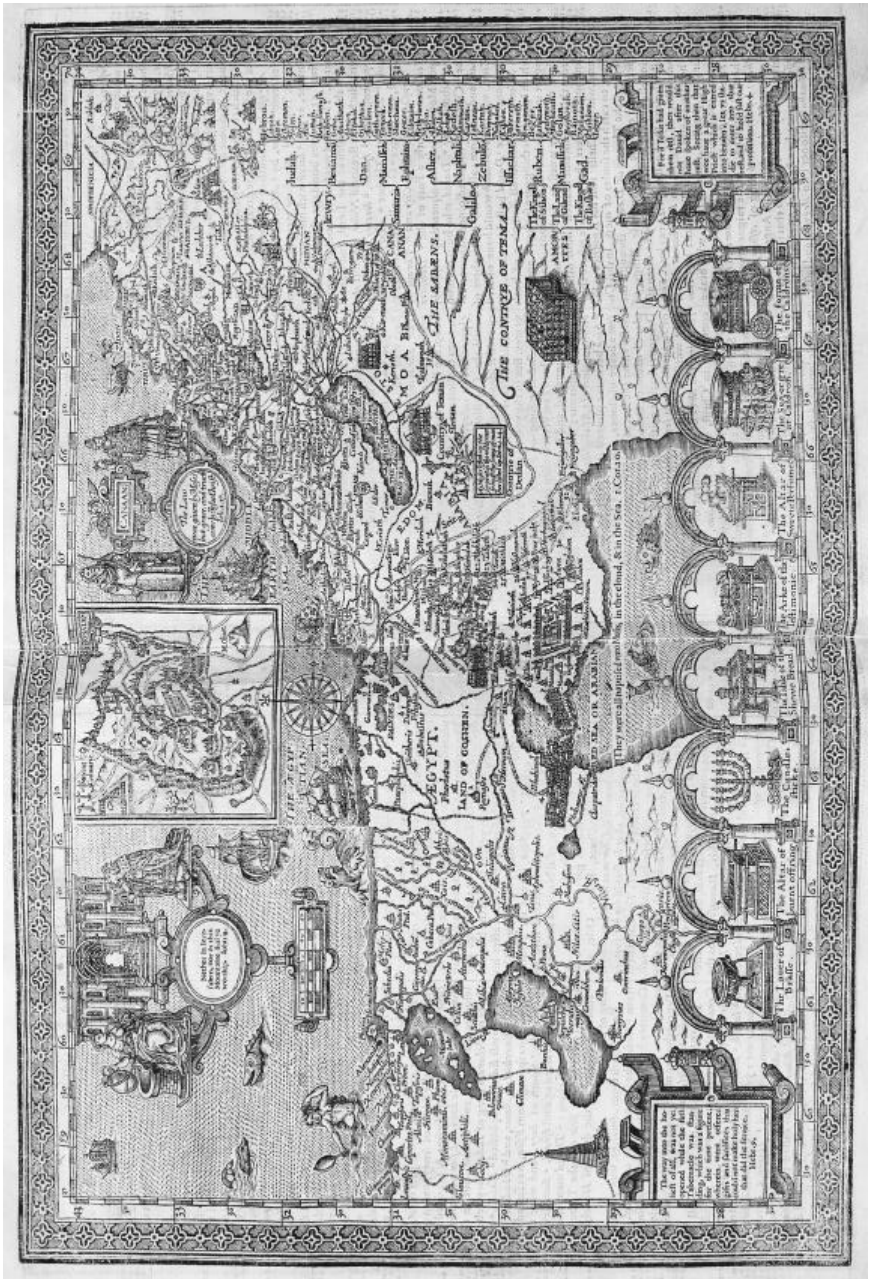

Figure 1. John Speed's Map of Canaan, folio version (ARC A13.1G, courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library).

John Speed was one of Britain's most eminent cartographers, who at the time of the publication of the KJV was in the throes of completing his famous maps of the counties of England and Wales, along with a general map of Scotland, and five maps of Ireland, entitled "The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine" (1610–1611).[8] In fact, the Canaan map was the first map ever produced by Speed, after apparently taking over the labors of one John More, a Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, and minister of St. Andrew's Church in Norwich, who is specifically credited. John More had been working on the map project—including the "Description of Canaan"—and, after his death in 1592, it passed to Speed, then a tailor and amateur scholar,[9] who had just published the "Genealogies," after apparently taking over this project from the scholar Hugh Broughton, who had fled to the Continent.[10] In 1595 the map was published as a hand-colored, fourteen-sheet wall map of "Canaan in Biblical Times," with six further papers of description, though this has not survived and must have been produced as a very limited edition.

With the work of Broughton and More in hand, as well as examples from continental map makers, Speed was then—in an age less sensitive to copyright issues and plagiarism than today—able to create very admirable publications. The "Genealogies" being endorsed by the king was a tremendous coup. Speed's initials on the title page, "J. S.," however, do not quite do justice to the work he inherited from others.

Such work was nevertheless known in influential circles. Speed was subsequently invited to join the Society of Antiquaries in London, with a new career and considerable social elevation. His work in cartography flourished, not only with the "Theatre" of British towns and counties, but also subsequently with "A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World," published in 1627.[11] The folio plate for the "Canaan" map was issued also as a simple uncolored print and could be hand-colored for decorative purposes.[12] It was not part of John Speed's original collection in "Prospect" but was included in due course as an admirable work of the cartographer. The map appeared in the version of "Prospect" published in 1676 by Thomas Bassett and Richard Chiswell, and by Christopher Browne (at the Globe near the West End of St. Paul's church) in 1695, in a large format (15 x 20 1/2 in. or 38 x 52 cm.).[13] Although Speed died in 1629, he left a lasting legacy. With its printing as part of both the Geneva Bible and the King James authorized translation, Speed's map of "Canaan" took on a special importance for British people of the early Stuart era and beyond.

If we look at Speed's "Canaan" closely now the first thing that usually strikes the modern, cartographically savvy viewer is the shape of the coastline, which seems to slump rather than stand tall on its proper north-south axis. In fact, cartographically savvy people of the time of the KJV also knew better, but this convention of the slumped coastline had had a long history, and its retention seems to have been in some deference to that. The predecessor for this shape is a tradition of mapmaking on the basis of Ptolemy's second-century map of the world, or rather the lists of sites recorded by Ptolemy, with his coordinates, that were created as maps, his map of Asia [not shown] being the overarching template here.[14] This conservative tradition of rendering maps in line with Ptolemy continued alongside better mapping based on maritime charts.

Despite the precedent in Ptolemy's shaping of the land, in Speed's "Canaan" the details of nomenclature are very different. While Ptolemy was attempting to define, coherently and accurately, the actual world as he knew it in the second century, Speed's map conforms to no place that ever existed in the form that it is drawn. In the details of Speed's "Canaan," we do not have a historical place: this is a tool for reading only, an aid to the literate as they studied.

The predecessors here are maps of the Holy Land: Sebastian Münster's map of "Terra Sancta" (1542) [not shown], for example. The orientation of Münster's map is initially perplexing, with north (septentrio) being on the right side of the frame. Rotated, however, we see the same slumping land of Ptolemy. Despite this conservatism, this is not Ptolemy's world. Münster's map creates a composite biblical past, with names from the Old and New Testament together. We have the division of the land into the portions for the twelve tribes, and stopping points for the Hebrews during the forty years of the wandering in the wilderness. We see the drowned towns of Sodom and Gomorrah in the water of the Dead Sea. And yet in the same map we also have "Ptolemais," a town so named in the Hellenistic era, and also Capernaum and Bethsaida, along with other places of the New Testament. The aim in conflating everything altogether was to provide a simple geography with the sole purpose of a better comprehension of the text. These are maps for the story, not maps useful for travel or presentations of the geographical arrangement of the land at any given point in history. What we might call a "pan-narrative" map is nothing like the *Oxford Bible Atlas*, for example, or any other maps we use today for biblical scholarship that aim to situate towns and features and name them in accordance

with a particular period of time. These maps come from a time before the historical-critical method.

Speed's map rewards a careful observer with curious details. In the top left corner is a plan of Jerusalem (see fig. 2) that contains a note of forty important places there. Mount Calvarie has three crosses; an open grave lies in a fenced field, and below Judas hangs on a tree. There is an outline of the temple in the woodcut, but more detail in the folio plate. There are walls within walls, with a small "M. Olivet" in the bottom right. What might immediately strike an observer here is that it is plainly not a Jerusalem for the pilgrim trail. There is no attempt to indicate holy places to be visited by Christian travelers. After thirteen hundred years of Christian molding of the city of Jerusalem, it is remarkable to find no real indication of placements as recorded in many pilgrim accounts. This, as we shall see, reflected the dominant British ideology of the time in terms of the Jerusalem "out there." Indeed, it is not a Jerusalem "out there" at all. It simply tells the reader that Golgotha was somewhere on the western side of the city, and Jesus' grave was nearby. In real geographical terms, Jesus' tomb is traditionally located to the west of the Rock of Calvary, and here it is south. Judas's death is just to the south of this on the western side, when traditionally it was at Akeldama. Only the basics are correct: Jesus' tomb to the west and Olivet to the east. Maps of the exact placements of the holy sites of Jerusalem were clearly very far from Speed's mind.

Figure 2. Inset map of Jerusalem from John Speed's Map of Canaan, folio version (ARC A13.1G, courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library).

In the main map, there are visualizations of the tabernacle in the wilderness, in the south of Sinai, and the route of the wandering in the wilderness, with stopping

places. Sodom stands in the middle of the Dead Sea. In the woodcut for the quarto edition [not shown] there is an instance of the cutter running out of space, so that it reads: "The Lake of Sodom now"—while in the folio plate this title is properly completed as "The Lake of Sodom now *the Dead Sea*." Most strikingly, there are many depictions of armies doing battle in various locations, including a dramatic visualization of the drowning of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea. The armies are equipped as they were in the late Elizabethan and early Stuart eras, with long fighting spears and helmets. One can imagine readers of the KJV pouring over such depictions with eyeglasses at the ready.

On the right there are divisions of the land into "Jewry, "Samarie," and "Galile," with subdivisions and cities, followed by the category "Amorites," made up by the Kingdom of Sihon, the Land of Gilead, and the Kingdom of Bashan. For an explanation of all this and more, the accompanying "Description of Canaan" is necessary, which provides a rationale for the way things are laid out in the map, curious as choices sometimes seem.

While this "pan-narrative" map is entirely story-related, there is some peculiarity. This map sits oddly within a frame with late-sixteenth-century longitude and latitude, giving the impression of a place "out there" despite its nonexistence in the form portrayed. Also included from the present times are large ships. There are two in the smaller woodcut and one in the larger plate. Along with these ships, which suggest the endeavors of merchant adventurers and trade with the east, there are sea monsters: two ships, two sea monsters in the smaller woodcut, and one ship and three sea monsters in the larger plate, with a sea monster actually attacking a ship and sinking it. This is not a depiction of Jonah's story, since the sea monster of Jonah does not sink the ship. Instead, here we find a familiar trope in Terra Sancta maps, warning pilgrims of the dangers of travel—or rather "travail."

In fact, all these features are found in Speed's principal source map, Ortelius's map of Palestine, from 1570, and were used also in Ortelius's map of "Terra Sancta" [neither shown here]. However, the contents of Speed's map of "Canaan" have nothing to do with a location in his contemporaneous world, despite this. Ortelius's Terra Sancta was indeed a place "out there" in the contemporaneous world, since the landscape of Palestine was dotted with holy sites to be visited by pilgrims in the present, and for pilgrims the dangers of the sea journey to Jaffa were well known. The sea monster is a catchall for every kind of maritime disaster: being blown off course, shipwreck, capture by pirates looking to enslave the human cargo,

disease on board, and so on. The goal of these maps was truly to inform in the case of those who did venture forth on a pilgrimage. Ortelius created his map using numerous accounts of the placements of sacred sites on the pilgrim trail, noted from the Byzantine period onward. Speed's borrowing from Ortelius's contemporary Palestine map, with its navigational frame, resulted in a content that has no concern with the holy sites of Palestine, and therefore creates certain mental jumps between the present and the past, between the story and the real world as it existed, and between two different ideologies affecting the place where the biblical story happened.

By comparison, even long before the historical-critical method, Montano's 1572 map [not shown] of "Terrae Canaan Abrah[am]ae tempore et ante adventum filio israel cum vicinis et finitimis regionib[us]" does not do this. Montano has ships and a sea monster but the ships are small generic vessels, imagined as if appropriate to ancient times, and thus here they do rightly approximate Jonah, the ships and sea monster being in close proximity. In Montano's work there are no coordinates for navigation. It is a strongly historical map, showing a past place, and viewers can see it as an early attempt at creating the land as it was, or at the least the creation of a map appropriate to one book, that of Genesis. With a map like this there is an implication that there is not just one story or time in the Bible, but different ones that have their own integrity and nomenclature.

As we have seen, Speed's map is similar to Sebastian Münster's in being a pan-narrative map in which places from different times could be found on the same page, without any concern for where holy places were located in Palestine, or any worry about coherent naming. Oddly, the lack of coherent naming can even be extrabiblical in regard to places. Where, for example, in the Bible is the "Middle Earth Sea"? Indeed, nowhere: the "Middle Earth Sea" is an English rendering of the Latin term commonly used in Speed's own Europe as today: the Mediterranean. A biblical name would have been the "Sea" or "the Great Sea" (Num 34:6, 7; Josh 1:4; etc.). Speed here takes the benchmark term of classical rather than biblical authors for his terminology.

Speed's "Canaan," however, is a map built out of the narratives of the Bible, with only a passing nod to the land "out there," to its present existence as Palestine, *Filistin*, now part of the al-Shams district of the Ottoman Empire. The name of the land described in the map itself drums this in. "Canaan" is not a land of the contemporaneous world. It is patently "long ago," but it is still far more than the Canaan of Genesis. It is not "the Land of Israel," since that might have sounded far too much the language

of "Jewry," or at least a term narratively subsequent to the conquest narrated in Joshua, a label that in narrative terms represents a specific phase in history, not even appropriate to the language of the New Testament. This land was, after all, called "Canaan" for the long ages prior to the time of Israelite expansion (e.g., Num 34:2). It is not the "Palestine" of classical literature and contemporaneous European and Arabic nomenclature (despite the Ottoman deconstructions).[15] And it is certainly not "Terra Sancta," the pilgrim's Holy Land, for that was the ideology of Catholicism, deeply spurned by the Protestant British, a point we will return to below.

So "Canaan" was presumably chosen as a name for the land that could be fitting through the whole course of the biblical narrative. It makes everything else (Israel, Judah, Judaea, Galilee, Samaria, Philistina) seem rather temporal. Given that Speed's map does not simply relate to one period of a distant past, but to all periods of biblical history, the word *Canaan* was chosen as the paradigmatic name of the region. "Canaan" takes us back to the land as established by God, or at least to the land as found in the book of Genesis, the land promised to Abraham and all his descendants, which, as every seventeenth-century Christian knew, could mean them (Gal 3:29). It is a simple, bald term, and visually the title "Canaan" appears as a tablet between a prophet and a high priest—namely, Moses and Aaron—two great figures of Old Testament authority. The land was and always is Canaan, despite the changes of the political landscape evidenced in the texts.

For us, looking at Speed's pan-narrative map today with the historical-critical method placed on one side, the curious thing is that it is not that unfamiliar. Speed's map is comparable to what we find today in terms of the imaginary worlds: Narnia (C. S. Lewis), Middle Earth (J. R. R. Tolkien), or Earthsea (Ursula le Guin). One can see easily in these maps how much they owe to the style of John Speed's map of "Canaan" and others like it. The Protestant reformers had long encouraged the use of maps to foster a better understanding of the sacred texts, with a variety of maps featuring in the Geneva Bibles of John Calvin from 1559 onward.[16] The English edition had five maps. As Catherine Delano-Smith and Roger J. P. Kain observe, "[t]he point of the maps, together with other readers' aids, was to help the new, vernacular, bible-reading public to reach a correct way of reading when they read in the vernacular "for themselves."[17] Eventually, not to be outdone, Catholic scholarship followed suit: the maps for the final volume of the Polyglot Bible (1571–1572), edited by the erudite Montano

and printed in Antwerp by Christophe Plantin, was an essential insert containing essays, illustrations and maps resulting from Montano's great scholarship, under the patronage of Philippe of Spain. The latter were designed not only to be useful to readers but also as aids for contemplation.[18]

In short, the Protestant pan-narrative maps were not intended as an aid to pilgrimage. Indeed, for those who ventured out of Britain to the Holy Land of their present with these maps, in the seventeenth century, it was as if we might be told that one could visit Middle Earth. On the basis of reading the *Lord of the Rings*, you would take a ship, and land somewhere proximate to the Shire, but it would be hard to tell as all the names would be different. There would be towns where there are none on the map, and Hobbiton would be a distant memory, with various people giving you different opinions on where it was. Expecting to see hamlets in green hills with cozy burrows occupied by little hobbits, you would find this land developed into bustling industrial centers, with a diversity of cultures, ruled not by hobbits but by some group of people that have no place in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy at all. Later editions of the King James Bible in fact have visualizations of the biblical past, drawn by the Bohemian artist Wenceslaus Hollar, which portray ancient Jerusalem as magnificent as contemporary London.[19] The verdant landscape of these pictures is likewise assumed. The dissonance experienced by Protestant travelers to Palestine when faced with a land "out there," not at all like that of the green and grand past they imagined, would have been striking.[20]

Speed's map could not be employed as a useful guide for any tourist. By creating a story map it severs the text from the actual world, and minimizes the risk of anyone assuming they should get on a ship and sail to Jaffa. The reason why the map is so determinedly textual is explained by the peculiarities of the era in which it was drawn, an era that paradoxically mingled a huge boom in commercial travel with a huge rejection of particularly Christian travel to the place where the sacred story of the Bible took place.

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, England had seized the world of trade and commerce as never before, founded on selling the raw and some manufactured products of wool and tin. Such trade was undertaken by companies of merchants who, with a charter from the Crown, were given a license to trade and a monopoly over given areas. The Levant Company traded east throughout the year, negotiating the mercantile empires of Florence and Venice, who had ports around the Mediterranean.[21] Britain developed itself as a formidable sea power. Small "factories," comprised of

a group of agents ("factors"), were established in various places throughout the "Levant," the East, with main centers in Cairo, Damascus, and Aleppo, and English ships were used by the company to sell goods, and buy in Levantine exotica: raw silk, mohair, cotton, carpets, drugs, spices, currants, and indigo.[22] The seagoing adventurer intent on making his fortune was the quintessential Englishman: a character that had been affirmed with the publication in 1589 of a compendium of amazing voyages made by Englishmen over time, edited by Richard Hakluyt. This was so popular that it was expanded and published in three volumes in 1598, 1599, and 1600.[23] Men who sailed east to the Levant intent on trade and profit were the heroes of the hour.

This world of the eastern Mediterranean was that of the Ottoman Empire. With its base at Constantinople (Istanbul) the Ottoman Empire was the Western world's superpower, ruled by a sultan the English would call "the Great Turk" or "Grand Signor" (in the lingua franca), and an empire the small and divided kingdoms and principalities of Christian Europe looked to with fear and some awe. With the importance of maritime trade, maps were produced on the continent of Europe that enabled traders to gain an accurate sense of where ports were located, and other markets further inland. A key map made from such maritime maps and much copied was that of Ortelius [not shown], produced in 1570. One can see here at once how different things were from Speed's map of Canaan, or even Ortelius's own Ptolemy-faithful map of Palestine. The maritime maps show things quite accurately. But one can also see how sparse sound knowledge was inland from the main ports. The names of ports fray out around the coast, but the interiors of the Ottoman lands are relatively empty in comparison with the known lands of Europe.

Despite the opening up of the British Isles to the world, and trading from intrepid sea captains, the Protestant triumph had quashed the notion that there was anything to be gained from going on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land: this was a feature of Catholicism, not Protestantism, and there were numerous denunciations of the practice to be drawn on from the pages of Luther and Calvin and almost every Protestant reformer.[24] The holy places were not intrinsically sacred, and there was no reward in heaven for your visiting them. It was no longer politically advantageous for British people to set sail and go on pilgrimage. Within Britain all the great sites of local pilgrimage, from Canterbury to Walsingham, had been smashed apart.[25] Just as the world of economic enterprise had opened up the Levant, the dominant religious ideology had closed it down. Seafarers

and adventurers might go forth to strange lands, but the pious—especially all decent Protestant women—stayed home.

British travelers to Jerusalem in the time of James I were very rare, and invariably men. Jerusalem was not a trading center, and was far from the main factories in Aleppo, Damascus, and Cairo. What Englishman would dare to go to Jerusalem, when such a journey was extremely dangerous—whether overland or by sea—and if pilgrims returned from it they were in danger of being considered closet papists? In Tudor England, from the period after the Act against the Pope's Authority in 1536 until 1590, few travelers to Palestine left any record of their journeys. One exception was John Locke, whose entire journey of 1553 as printed in Richard Hakluyt's travel narratives is about Locke's travels to and from Palestine but not what he actually did on land.[26] Also in Hakluyt, there was Laurence Aldersley, who went to Palestine in 1581. He was a merchant who simply passed through the country while doing more important things concerning trade.[27] There was also the rather racy account of a journey around 1585 by Edward Webbe, ship's gunner and Turkish sex slave.[28]

And then came Henry Timberlake, an enterprising English merchant adventurer and sea captain who in 1601 took a slightly impromptu journey from Cairo to Jerusalem, where he was arrested as a spy at Jaffa Gate by guards who had never heard of England or Queen Elizabeth, and was released only through the intercession of a charitable Moor from Fez in Morocco, who decided to look after Timberlake as a stranger in a strange land, and with whom he returned to Cairo on racing camels. Upon release in Jerusalem, Timberlake and his English companion John Burrell were forced by the Ottoman authorities to stay at San Salvatore monastery, under the command of the Franciscan Padre Guardiano, who was vouchsafed with the care of all Western Christian travelers and who dutifully washed Timberlake's feet upon his arrival in the courtyard.[29] Timberlake tells his story with remarkable honesty and vigor, despite his embarrassment at this turn of events, but in fact such candor was something never intended for public viewing. It was written as a letter to a friend in England who found it so interesting he published Timberlake's letter as a short book, in 1603, before Timberlake arrived home to his wife and family, after being delayed for months by shipwreck in Tripoli. The title was surprisingly provocative given the dominant Protestant ideology: *A True and Strange Discourse on the Travailes of two English Pilgrimes: what admirable accidents befell them in their journey to Ierusalem, Gaza, Gran Cayro, Alexandria, and other pla*ces.[30] While the word *pilgrims* could have a wider ref-

erence than today, meaning "journeyers" or "travelers" in general, it had an association with Christian pilgrimage in particular, so that using the word in close proximity to the word "Jerusalem" would have sounded a clanging gong. In fact, the criticism of Timberlake by one "Theophilus Lavender" (= William Aspley) indicates the issues, when he writes that Timberlake did not have any say in the publication's title choice, and would not have liked it, since "Pilgrims goe with a superstitious devotion to worship Reliques at Jerusalem; but master Tymberley and his companions went thither onely as travellers to see the Holy Land."[31] The taint of Catholicism was a dangerous thing, and someone had certainly erred by putting the word *pilgrims* in the title.

At the time of the KJV's translation, Timberlake's account provided a rare chronicle of British travel to Palestine, including the traditional holy places, and there was clearly a great yearning for the news Timberlake provided, despite an official policy of no interest in the land "out there" for its religious resonances. Timberlake's record of his journey was released by a bookseller and printer, Thomas Archer, from a shop opposite the Royal Exchange. The shop's location meant that the book was quickly seen and snapped up by traders, and it had a further three editions before the King James Bible appeared.[32]

But the publication history of Timberlake's account shows us the social stigma that could attach to an Englishman who journeyed to Palestine and dared to tour the holy places. Those of a more correct Protestantism, in an era of Puritan pressure, found it unsavory. In entering the world of the map of "Canaan," in the here and now, Timberlake walked a dangerous path, and he was overtly criticized for his friendliness to papists.[33] In an unauthorized edition printed in 1611 by John Norton for another bookseller, Hugh Perry, there is something shocking, which shows how dangerous this was in terms of clashing ideologies. An artist has created a visualization of a scene in which Timberlake and his Moroccan guide cross the desert, here on a single camel together (fig. 3). The camel is drawn as a "cameleopard," and the Moroccan is depicted like a puppet or actor with a blackened face. The representation is almost a cartoon. As for Henry Timberlake, he is outfitted like a Catholic pilgrim to Santiago di Compostella, with a little scallop shell, associated with that site, positioned on his cloak and a ship brooch on his hat. Even more shocking, the camel has a huge erection, mirrored in the upright baton the Moor is holding. The Moor's positioning behind Timberlake gives us the simple offensive message. The quintessential British merchant adventurer, courageous sea captain Henry Timberlake, who

Figure 3. Title page from *A Relation of the Travels of Two English Pilgrimes*, printed by John Norton for Hugh Perry (London, 1611). Courtesy of the British Library, London.

risked so much to further British interests on the high seas, was here portrayed as a papist sodomized by a Muslim.

This tells us so much about the ideology that should be rejected, and indicates why it was so important to avoid a map in the KJV that looked like an invitation to travel to the land "out there," the "Holy Land" of Catholicism, as a pilgrim. The term *Holy Land* could be used as a kind of historical legacy, without any implication of there being sacredness attached to it, but it might be better to avoid such language. Others from Britain were traveling to Palestine, but they seem reticent about publicizing the fact. For example, there were the trips in the 1590s by the gentleman Fynes Moryson, who went with his brother Henry on a historical journey of investigation.[34] Moryson's travels through Europe and the Middle East were very much *not* a pilgrimage. He bypassed thirteen hundred years of Christian pilgrimage with more of a view to Herodotus's investigative history, with frequent citations of classical authors to indicate that it was the classical *historia* that was his model. When he got to Palestine the biblical places were of course interesting in terms of their historical actuality in

the here and now, but he was far from prayerful. His mentality was much more like a modern journalist than a pilgrim, and he supplies a great deal of information on the customs and situation of Palestine in this period. Hence he had a scientific style. Moryson's work did not appear in print until 1617. Given what happened to Timberlake, it was no wonder that Moryson was not eager to publish.

Other contemporaneous travelers insisted that they were just passing through Palestine like any other place, with an interest that could only be described as either historical or educational. Like Timberlake, they could be skeptical of claims to biblical authenticity, and their journeys to Palestine are invariably enclosed in wider purposes, largely to do with trade, including those who—coincidentally—met Timberlake in Jerusalem: a group of factors from Aleppo fleeing an outbreak of plague. Among them, William Biddulph, the preacher ministering to the factory, wrote of Jerusalem incidentally, while his concern was with other places.[35] Other travelers never published their observations of Jerusalem in their own lifetimes: the travel journals of John Sanderson, the Levant Company merchant who helped Timberlake in Tripoli, were not published until Samuel Purchas printed an edition in his collection *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, published in 1625, in this case "pilgrims" meaning people on journeys here, there, and everywhere. The focus of Jerusalem is nowhere to be seen in his anthology.[36] The British Library has an anonymous manuscript, "A Particular of my Journey, with those meane observations I have collected" (British Library manuscript Add. MS 17374 and A. XXXIX) that includes a date, indicating that the traveler arrived in Jerusalem on January 7, 1607 (= 1608, by contemporary reckoning), but his account was never published.

Again, the gentleman traveler Thomas Coryate visited Jerusalem in 1614, but his account is given only as an epitome in Purchas.[37] In the year of the publication of the King James Bible one account that was published was that of the preacher John Cartwright, but like that of William Biddulph the concern was with a wide area, and the account was one of travel and investigation.[38] A prime exponent of this new genre was George Sandys, traveler, poet, and scholar, who published the account of his journeys in 1615,[39] one year after the refreshingly idiosyncratic adventures of William Lithgow, a Scottish traveler.[40] The travel narrative at this point took the place of pilgrim accounts of old, and thus began a type of literature that continues to the present day.

Thus, in the Tudor and early Stuart period the suspicion of pilgrimage and the interest in commercial and scientific travel occurred at the same

time. If Palestine was one place among many countries of interest, then it lost its significance as a goal in its own right, with all the legacy of pilgrimage it contained. In these travelers' accounts we see a growing confidence in travel for its own sake, and a new spirit of critical thinking about the biblical past as localized in places.

Given the potential criticisms of visiting Palestine, however, one wonders too how many British visitors to Palestine went under the radar, like the anonymous writer of the British Library manuscript. They were either English Catholics venturing still on pilgrimage, or Protestants who found the inhibiting rhetoric against pilgrimage and the "Holy Land" just too stern. In the San Salvatore logbook one can still read the record of every traveler they hosted in their hostel, and it duly has "Henricus Timberlare de Anglia, Ereticus," "Henry Timberley (Timberlake) of England, heretic," as well as the names of John Burrell and the refugee factors from Aleppo Timberlake happened to meet.[41] As the years go by, in this logbook, there are many others from "Anglia" that never dared to publicize their journeys.

Perhaps Speed's map of "Canaan" in the KJV hit the minds of some British people like an invitation. They could go to the land "out there," despite everything, and with a fair dose of reserve about the activity. By the time of the Cambridge edition of the KJV by John Field "Printer to the Universitie," the new form of the pan-narrative map (dated 1657) had changed its title to "Chorographica Terrae Sanctae."[42] By the late 1650s, then, there was not the same fastidiousness as in 1611 about the nomenclature of the land. The map offers all the detail of the long tradition of European "Holy Land" pilgrim maps that had been so firmly set aside in Speed's "Canaan," and offered some invitation to the land "out there" once more. The journey would be done now on the basis of the precedents now firmly set: British investigative travel for its own sake.

Notes

1. For which see Joan E. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places* (rev. ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 2006), 295–332; Günter Stemberger, *Jews and Christians in the Holy Land* (trans. Ruth Tuschling; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 48–85.

2. *The Onomasticon by Eusebius of Caesarea: Palestine in the Fourth Century A.D.* (trans. G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville; ed. Joan E. Taylor; Jerusalem: Carta, 2003), 5; Eusebius, *Onomasticon* 2.1–3.

3. *The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments: Authorised King James Version* (London: Collins, 1958).

4. *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series: James I,* vol. 57: *1603–1610*, 639:

"License to John Speed to print genealogies of the Holy Scriptures, together with the maps of Canaan, for ten years." National Archives, Kew.

5. *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series: James I,* vol. 77: *1611–1618*, 431. National Archives, Kew.

6. David Norton, *A Textual History of the King James Bible* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 9–10; Gordon Campbell, *Bible: The Story of the King James Version, 1611–2011* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 308. The map was cut by Christoph Switzer, who is depicted on the title page of the New Testament in the KJV; see Campbell, *Bible*, 94–95. Despite it being included as an intrinsic part of the publication, it is not found reprinted in the recent facsimile editions.

7. It was also printed as a separate text, published in numerous different editions.

8. Bernhard Klein, *Maps and the Writing of Space in Early Modern England and Ireland* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2001), 105–9.

9. "An Advertisement of a large Map of Canaan. This Map was first drawn by Mr. More, a learned Divine, Author of the Sacred Chronology that bears his Name, etc., first Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, and afterwards Minister of St. Andrew's in Norwich: a Person so well acquainted with the Hebrew Text, that one calls him 'another Jerome'; and so exact in this Map, hathe spent a great part of his Life in it. After his Death, which was 1592, it was published by the industrious Mr. John Speed," in *Term Catalogues, 1668–1709 A.D.* (ed. Edward Arber; 3 vols.; London: n.p., 1903–1908), 2:22: *Easter Term, licensed May, 1683*; and see also Arber, *Term Catalogues*, 1:50, Hilary Term Licenced June, 1682; see Ashley Baynton-Williams, "John Speed," *Map Forum*. Online: http://www.mapforum.com/04/speed3.htm.

10. Sarah Bendall, "Speed, John (1551/2–1629)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) 10:1093. Online: http://www.oxforddnb.com.

11. See particularly John Speed, *A Prospect of the Most Famous Parts of the World*, facsimile edition with an introduction by Raleigh A. Skelton (repr., Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1966).

12. See Kenneth Nebenzahl, *Maps of the Holy Land: Images of the Holy Land through Two Millennia* (New York: Abbeville, 1986), pl. 39.

13. In editions of the KJV in libraries today it has sometimes been removed from the "Genealogies," since early on it was cut out to use as a picture in its own right.

14. Claudius Ptolemy, *Geographia Universalis, vetus et nova complectens* (Basel: Henricus Petri, 1540), Tabula Asiae IIII; and see for Palestine folio pages 102–4. Accessed at Essex University Library.

15. Haim Gerber, " 'Palestine' and Other Territorial Concepts in the 17th Century," *Journal of Middle East Studies* 30 (1998): 563–72.

16. For these see Catherine Delano-Smith with Elizabeth Morley Ingram, *Maps in Bibles, 1500–1600: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Geneva: Droz, 1991); and idem, "Maps as Art and Science: Maps in Sixteenth Century Bibles," *Imago Mundi* 42 (1990): 65–83.

17. Catherine Delano-Smith and Roger J. P. Kain, *English Maps: A History* (British Library Studies in Map History 2; London: British Library, 1999), 257.

18. Zur Shalev, "Sacred Geography, Antiquarianism and Visual Erudition: Benito

Arias Montano and the Maps in the Antwerp Polyglot Bible," *Imago Mundi* 55 (2003): 56–80.

19. *The Holy Bible containing the Bookes of the Old and Testament* (Cambridge: John Field, 1666).

20. The observations of Leonhart Rauwolf, who visited Jerusalem in 1573 (and which he first published in his Swabian dialect), were published in English as edited by J. Ray, *A Collection of Curious Travels and Voyages* (2 vols.; London: S. Smith and B. Walford, 1693), 1:224–25; see also Karl H. Dannenfeldt, *Leonhard Rauwolf: Sixteenth-Century Physician, Botanist and Traveler* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968).

21. John A. Wheeler, *A Treatise of Commerce* (1601; repr., New York: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum 1975), 87–93.

22. A. C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935), 17.

23. Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation, made by Sea or Over Land* (12 vols.; 1589; repr., Glasgow: J. MacLehose, 1903–1905).

24. Graham Tomlin, "Protestants and Pilgrimage," in *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage* (ed. Craig G. Bartholomew and Fred Hughes; London: Ashgate, 2004), 110–25.

25. C. M. N. Eire, *War against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

26. "The Voyage of M. John Locke to Jerusalem," in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations,* 5:76–104.

27. "The first voyage or journey made by Master Laurence Aldersley, Marchant of London, to the Cities of Jerusalem and Tripolis &c," in Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations,* 5:202–14; John Hampden, ed., *Richard Hakluyt: The Tudor Venturers* (London: Folio Society, 1970), 168–76.

28. *The Rare and Most Wonderfull Things which Edw. Webbe an Englishman borne, hath seene and passed in his troublesome travailes, in the Cities of Ierusalem, Damasko, Bethlehem and Galely, newly enlarged and corrected by the author* (1590; repr., Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1973).

29. See Joan Taylor, *The Englishman, the Moor and the Holy City* (Stroud: Tempus, 2006).

30. (1603; repr., Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1974). A prepublication handwritten copy exists in the British Library (MS Sloane 2496, 62r–70v).

31. William Biddulph, *Travels into Africa, Asia and to the Blacke Sea* (1609; repr., Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1973), Bv–r.

32. In 1608, 1609, 1611, 1612, 1616, 1620, and 1631.

33. See the further invective of "Theophilus Lavender" reviewed in Taylor, *Englishman*, 219–23.

34. Fynes Moryson, *An Itinerary written by Fynes Moryson. First in the Latin Tongue, and then translated by him into English* (3 vols.; 1617; repr., Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1971); idem, *An Itinerary Containing His Ten Yeeres Travell through the Twelve Dominions* (4 vols.; repr., Glasgow: J. MacLehose, 1907).

35. Biddulph, *Travels into Africa,* preface and editing by Theophilus Lavender;

idem, "Sundry the personall Voyages performed by J. Sanderson … begun in October 1584, ended in October 1602," in Samuel Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrimes*, pt. 2 (1625; repr., Glasgow: J. MacLehose, 1905), 8:248–304; 9:485.

36. John Sanderson, "Sundrie the personall Voyages performed by J. Sanderson … begun in October 1584, ended in October 1602," in Purchas, *Pilgrimes*, 8:305; 9:412–86; idem, *The Travels of John Sanderson in the Levant, 1584–1602* (ed. William Foster; London: Hakluyt Society, 1931).

37. Thomas Coryate, "Master Thomas Coryates travels to, and Observations in Constantinople, and other places in the way thither, and his Iourney thence to Aleppo, Damasco and Ierusalem," in Purchas, *Pilgrimes*, 9:389–447; see Michael Strachan, *The Life and Adventures of Thomas Coryate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962).

38. John Cartwright, *The Preachers Travels. Wherein is set downe a true Iournall, to the confines of the East Indies, through the great Countreys of Syria, Mesopotamia, Armenia, Media, Hircania and Parthia* (1611; repr., Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1977); idem, "Observations of Master John Cartwright in his voyage from Aleppo to Hispaan and backe againe," in Purchas, *Pilgrimes*, 8:482–523 (abbreviated version).

39. George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey begun An. Dom. 1610. Foure bookes containing a description of the Turkish Empire, of Aegypt, of the Holy Land, of the remote parts of Italy and the islands adioyning* (London: W. Barrett, 1615); idem, "A Relation of a Journey begun Anno Dom. 1610 written by Master George Sandys and here contracted," in Purchas, *Pilgrimes*, 8:88–247; idem, *Sandys Travels, containing an History of the Original and Present State of the Turkish Empire, Their Laws, Government, Policy, Military Force, Courts of Justice, and Commerce* (7th ed.; London: John Williams Jr., 1673); Richard Beale Davis, *George Sandys: Poet-Adventurer. A Study in Anglo-American Culture in the 17th Century* (London: Bodley Head, 1955); James Ellison, *George Sandys: Travel, Colonialism and Tolerance in the Seventeenth Century* (rev. ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); John Haynes Rutherford, *The Humanist as Traveller. George Sandys's Relation of a Journey begun An. Dom. 1610* (London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press/Associated University Presses, 1986).

40. William Lithgow, *A Most Delectable and True Discourse, of an admired and painefull peregrination from Scotland, to the most famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia and Affricke* (1614; repr., Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1971); idem, "Relations of the Travels of W. Lithgow a Scot, in Candy, Greece, the Holy-land, Egypt, and other parts of the East," in Purchas, *Pilgrimes*, 10:447–92; idem, *The totall discourse of the rare adventures and painefull peregrinations of long nineteene yeares travailes from Scotland to the most famous kingdomes in Europe, Asia and Affrica* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1640).

41. Taylor, *Englishman*, 180. I am grateful to the archivists and custodians of the monastery of San Salvatore for allowing me to see and photograph this volume. The register was published by Bertrand Zimolong, *Ein Pilgerverzeidnis au Jerusalem vom 1591 bis 1695* (Palaestina-Hefte 12–14: Cologne); repr. with corrections as *Ein Pilgerverzeichnis aus Jerusalem von 1561 bis 1695* (Cologne: J. P. Bachem, 1938).

42. *The Holy Bible* (Cambridge: John Field, 1666), illustrated with "chorographical sculp[ture]s" by J. Ogilvy, accessed at Essex University Library. The map faces folio page 299 and is dated 1657, with the name "Ho" for Hollar.

Part 2
KJV in the History of Bible Translation

Luther's Approach to Bible Translation and the KJV

Graham Tomlin

Perhaps the two most influential documents that emerged from the Reformation period were Martin Luther's translation of the Bible into German, which finally appeared in full in 1534, and the King James Version, whose 400th anniversary the English-speaking world celebrated in 2011. Both had an extensive and profound effect on the languages into which they were translated. Luther combined the various forms of contemporary German into one common vernacular usage, which became the basis for a standardized spoken and written language for centuries to come. The King James Version shaped the English language both in England itself and also in time throughout the world in the various British colonies, as British traders and missionaries took the King James Bible with them on their overseas ventures in subsequent centuries.

There is, of course, a vital link between the two: William Tyndale. Tyndale learned German specifically to read and to use Luther's translation. If one account of Tyndale's life is to be believed, after his appeal to Bishop Tunstall for patronage of the proposed new translation had been turned down, the scholar made a visit to Wittenberg in 1525 to familiarize himself with what was happening there, and presumably to meet Luther himself, before relocating to the low countries. Despite the fact that he took a different approach to translation from Luther, Tyndale's subsequent translation was thus significantly influenced by Luther's. In some estimates, 76 percent of the Old Testament and 84 percent of the New Testament language in the KJV derives from Tyndale, duly passed through the filter of the various versions of Coverdale, Geneva, the Bishops' Bible, and so on. Therefore, some of Luther's translation found its way indirectly into the King James Bible from Tyndale. Heinz Bluhm's work in the 1960s indi-

cated a number of instances of how phraseology and language in Luther's translation, turned into parallel English prose, found its way via Coverdale to the King James Bible.[1]

This is not to say, however, that the translations are the same, or take the same approach. As we will see, despite the fact that they both emerge out of the European Reformation, they take a very distinct and different approach to the task of translation, rooted in turn in very different theological and contextual starting points.

Martin Luther's Approach to Bible Translation

After his appearance before the emperor at the Diet of Worms in 1521, Luther was spirited away for his own safety to the Wartburg Castle, not far from one of his childhood homes in Eisenach. There he began the task of translating the Bible into German, with the New Testament appearing in 1522 (working from Erasmus's new edition of the Greek NT), and the full Bible finally in 1534.

Luther wrote about the task of, and his approach to, Bible translation in two main documents. One was his *Sendbrief von Dolmetschen*, or "An Open Letter on Translating," written while he waited at Coburg Castle for the outcome of the Diet of Augsburg in 1530. In September of that year, his Bible had come in for severe criticism, especially for his translation of Rom 3:28, when he inserted a word not found in the Greek—the word *allein*. So, a verse that in the NRSV reads: "For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law," was rendered in Luther's version: "So halten wir es nu, das der Mensch gerecht werde, on des Gesetzes werck, *alleine* durch den Glauben [without works of the law, through faith *alone*]." The *Sendbrief* was in part a defense of this decision and in part an explanation of his broader convictions about the task of Bible translation.

The other key document is his "Defense of the Translation of the Psalms," written in 1531, and finally published in December 1532. He also touched on the task in several instances of *Table Talk*, which give valuable brief insights into his approach to translation. From these documents, a number of themes emerge that refer to the requirements of a good translation, and a good translator, of the Bible.

1. An Idiomatic Translation

Luther's Bible was very significant for the German language, but it was by no means the first German translation. The first vernacular Bible in Europe had been produced in Strasbourg in 1466 in German. By 1507 thirteen further German editions had been produced as well as five different versions of the Psalms. Between 1477 and 1522 four Lower German editions of the Bible had also appeared. Luther therefore did not decide to translate because no German translation existed. Like the translators of the KJV, he wanted to improve on what was available. But unlike them he began directly from the Hebrew and Greek texts rather than using previous editions of the Bible as a starting point. Most significant, however, was his desire to make a truly localized, colloquial German translation. His criticisms of these previous German versions centered on their inaccessibility to ordinary people. As he put it in his "Prefaces to the Old Testament": "Nor have I read, up to this time, a book or letter which contained the right kind of German. Besides no one pays any attention to speaking real German. This is especially true of the people in the chancelleries, as well as those patchwork preachers and wretched writers."[2]

For Luther, the primary requirement for a translator of the Bible is not, strangely enough, expert knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, but an excellent knowledge of idiomatic German. For him, close familiarity with the receptor language is as important, if not more important, than knowledge of the donor languages. The aim is to find the most idiomatic way of expressing the sense of the biblical text in a way that people who speak that colloquial language can understand and follow. In this way, Luther established what John Flood called "the emancipation of the vernacular" from the hold that the classical languages had on German culture up until that point.[3]

In the *Sendbrief* he writes: "I wanted to speak German, not Latin or Greek, since it was German I had undertaken to speak in the translation. … We do not have to inquire of the literal Latin, how we are to speak German as these asses do. Rather we must inquire about this of the mother in the home, the children on the street, the common man in the marketplace. We must be guided by their language, the way they speak, and do our translating accordingly."[4]

The translator learns to translate not by reading Hebrew but by listening to people: "Therefore I must let the literal words go and try to learn how the German says that which the Hebrew expresses."[5] In his "Defense of the Translation of the Psalms," he writes: "Once he has the German words to

serve the purpose, let him drop the Hebrew words and express the meaning freely in the best German he knows."[6] His defense of the insertion of the word *alleine* in Rom 3:28 is at last in part a linguistic argument, claiming that colloquial German requires the *allein-kein* construction in comparing and contrasting two things.[7]

Luther often argues against the value of a direct word-for-word translation. For example, in his preface to the book of Job (1545) he writes: "The language of this book is more vigorous and splendid than that of any other book in all the Scriptures. Yet if it were translated everywhere word for word—as the Jews and foolish translators would have it done—and not for the most part according to the sense, no one would understand it."[8] Literal, word-for-word translations often obscure rather than reveal. And because Scripture is meant to reveal God, understanding is vital, so the translator must feel free to stay closer to a comprehensible form in the receptor language rather than leave obscurities unresolved in the donor language.

Luther therefore takes very seriously the context in which a translation takes place. For him, this includes both the linguistic context and the historical one. The second reason he gives for his inclusion of *alleine* in Rom 3:28 is the need for theological clarification in the polemical circumstances of the sixteenth century. This addition is needed, he says, "especially in these days, for they have been accustomed to works so long they have to be torn away from them by force. For these reasons it is not only right but also highly necessary to speak it out as plainly and fully as possible."[9]

Behind all this, there lies a significant principle: in translation, the vital thing is not a direct rendering of the original language, but the conveying of the idea behind the original language in ordinary speech. This of course assumes that it is possible to identify the ideas behind the words, which leads to Luther's second key principle in Bible translation.

2. A Theological Translation

For Luther, a translation needs to express the heart of the message of Scripture, which for him is the message of justification by faith alone. He describes the task of translation as like the hard work of clearing a field of stones and boulders.[10] The image conveys the idea of finding a rough field, full of obstacles that need to be cleared away. Similarly, the Bible presents a number of linguistic and theological problems that need to be ironed out, cleared up, made smooth. And in order to do this work, the translator needs to be a good theologian, one who understands the gospel.

While, as we have seen, Luther wants good idiomatic German, even that is subservient to the overall theological goal: "I preferred to do violence to the German language rather than to depart from the word."[11] If his first two reasons for the insertion of *alleine* into Rom 3:28 were linguistic and historical, the third is theological:

> For in that very passage he is dealing with the main point of Christian doctrine, namely, that we are justified by faith in Christ without any works of the law. And Paul cuts away all works so completely, as even to say that the works of the law—though it is God's law and word—do not help us for justification. … But when all works are so completely cut away—and that must mean that faith alone justifies—whoever would speak plainly and clearly about this cutting away of works will have to say, "Faith alone justifies us, and not works." The matter itself, as well as the nature of the language, demands it.[12]

A text that displays the dynamic at work here is Jas 2:24: "You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone" (NIV), a verse that could be fatal to Luther's interpretation of the gospel. At first glance, he translates it fairly straightforwardly: "So sehet ihr nun, daß der Mensch durch die Werke gerecht wird, nicht durch den Glauben allein." The key phrase—"not through faith alone"—is translated directly. However, there is a twist in the tail. In his translation of the verb δικαιοῦται ("justify"), he makes a subtle shift from a clearly present tense (in the Greek) to a tense that, if not exactly future, still implies an ongoing process that is not yet finished (in the German: *gerecht wird*). The "justification" referred to thus becomes eschatological. Luther's understanding of justification was that God's righteousness is given to us in Christ now, as an anticipation of the final declaration of righteousness to be pronounced one day upon us.[13] The subtle shift of the tense to indicate an ongoing process allows him to shift the focus of the verse from the declaration of justification in the present (in which no works are involved) to the final state of being justified in the future, the final delivery from all sin, which will involve a certain level of discipline and in one sense, "works." It is a small shift, but a significant one, guided by his prior theological understanding.

When there are disputed readings, a crucial guiding hand in Luther's translation is his understanding of the heart of the gospel. Where the meaning of the text is unclear, Luther often seeks to translate it in ways that fit his theological framework. For example, in Rom 1:17, another seminal verse for Luther, as it had sparked his own "Reformation breakthrough,"

the Greek simply has the phrase δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, which could of course mean "the righteousness that God possesses," "the righteousness God requires," or even "the justice of God." Luther translates it with the phrase "die Gerechtigkeit, die vor Gott gilt" (the righteousness that counts before God), making very clear in what sense he wants the phrase to be read, one that ties in with his notion of "passive righteousness," given to us by God.

One saying recorded in the *Table Talk* reports: "if some passage is obscure I consider whether it treats of grace or of law, whether wrath or the forgiveness of sin [is contained in it], and with which of these it agrees better. By this procedure I have often understood the most obscure passages. Either the law or the gospel has made them meaningful, for God divides his teaching into law and gospel."[14] Here it is the famous Lutheran distinction between law and gospel that dictates the resulting translation.

In a different fragment from the *Table Talk*, it is yet another of Luther's devices for interpretation, the three "orders," that is decisive: "the Bible speaks and teaches about the works of God. About this there is no doubt. These works are divided in three hierarchies: the household, the government, the church. If a verse does not fit the church, we should let it stay in the government or the household, whichever it is best suited to."[15]

Then again, Luther is convinced that the heart of the Bible's message is Christ. In his "Preface to the Old Testament" of 1545, he writes:

> The Hebrew language, sad to say, has gone down so far that even the Jews know little enough about it, and their glosses and interpretations (which I have tested) are not to be relied upon. I think that if the Bible is to come up again, we Christians are the ones who must do the work, for we have the understanding of Christ without which even the knowledge of the language is nothing. Because they were without it, the translators of old, even Jerome, made mistakes in many passages. Though I cannot boast of having achieved perfection, nevertheless, I venture to say that this German Bible is clearer and more accurate at many points than the Latin. So it is true that if the printers do not, as usual, spoil it with their carelessness, the German language certainly has here a better Bible than the Latin language—and the readers will bear me out in this.[16]

This bold claim that his German Bible is clearer than Jerome's is a claim to be not a better translator but a better theologian. Luther believes that his rediscovery of the centrality of Christ and his righteousness, received by faith, as the heart of the message of Scripture makes his Bible clearer in

the sense that the light of the gospel shines out more clearly from it than it does from Jerome's Latin translation.[17]

Luther therefore strives for a christological translation that conveys this central idea. When translating difficult Old Testament texts, "whenever equivocal words or constructions occur, that one would have to be taken which (without, however, doing injustice to the grammar) agrees with the New Testament."[18] Luther rejects Jewish exegesis of the Old Testament, because it fails to recognize Christ as the center of Scripture.

> For we followed the rule that wherever the words could have given or tolerated an improved meaning, there we did not allow ourselves to be forced by the artificial Hebrew of the rabbis into accepting a different inferior meaning … words are to serve and follow the meaning, and not the meaning the words.[19]

That final sentence goes to the heart of Luther's approach to Bible translation. For Luther, a good translation always elucidates the heart of the gospel. Again, the focus is not on the individual words of Scripture, but on a translation that conveys the heart of the message of the Bible.

3. A Faith-ful Translator

Besides a knowledge of colloquial German and a grasp of the essentials of the gospel, Luther has one other chief quality that he expects of a translator: "translating is not every man's skill as the mad saints imagine. It requires a right, devout, honest, sincere, God-fearing, Christian, trained, informed, and experienced heart. Therefore I hold that no false Christian or factious spirit can be a decent translator."[20] Translation does not just require a good theological knowledge. It also needs a certain experience of grace.

Luther's theology of the cross, developed in his early years, yet which continued to influence his theology throughout his career, emphasizes the place of experience in theology. As he put it in his *Operationes super Psalterium* of 1519–1521: "Let no one think himself a theologian if he has read, understood, and taught these things. … It is living, or rather dying and being damned, that makes a theologian, not understanding, reading, and speculating."[21]

For Luther, the experience of being radically humbled, brought to the end of one's own resources, leads to faith, in that it teaches the futil-

ity of relying on one's own works, achievements, abilities, and instead leads a person to cry out to God for mercy, lifting up hands not full of works, but the empty hands of faith. This is why true theology begins at the cross for Luther, and by "cross" he often means the experience of suffering. "Therefore we should know that God hides under the form of the worst devil. This teaches us that the goodness, mercy, and power of God cannot be grasped by speculation but must be understood on the basis of experience."[22]

Experience—notably the experience of despair, temptation, and doubt—teach the Christian not to rely on his or her own resources, but to simply trust the promise of God that God saves and rescues sinners. In this way, experience is the true teacher of theology. No one can understand true Christian theology unless they have undergone this radical humbling, this personal experience of what he would often call *Anfechtung*, leading to abandonment of self-reliance and instead faith in Christ alone. Translation requires good theology and good theology requires not just academic expertise or learning but personal faith, which is why, as mentioned above, translation "requires a right, devout, honest, sincere, God-fearing, Christian, trained, informed, and experienced heart."[23] Experience is vital for the making of a good theologian and therefore a good translator, partly at least because a good translation, which properly understands the distinction between law and gospel, aims to reproduce that same experience in the hearts of its readers. The goal of a translation of Scripture is not just understanding but faith.

Translation therefore requires a good knowledge of the idiomatic receptor language, a theologically astute mind that has understood the essence of the gospel and experience of grace. These are the distinguishing marks of Luther's approach to Bible translation.

In all these cases, attention is drawn away from the very words of Scripture, the *ipsissima verba*, to the meaning behind it, to the theological and christological heart of Scripture and to the experience of humbling that leads to faith. The emphasis lies for Luther not on the original words themselves but on the gospel they express; "words are to serve and follow the meaning, and not the meaning the words." In his mind the two main poles of the work of Bible translation are the internal message of the Scriptures and the person who hears them, understood in all the particularities of their social and linguistic context. The actual words of Scripture seem to recede into the background, in the shadow of his desire to communicate an idea to an audience.

The Approach to Bible Translation in the King James Version

In stark contrast to Luther's defiant and independent tone, the preface to the King James Version feels very different. Its deferential opening, flattering King James, the "most dread Sovereign," with mention of the blessings God has poured out on the nation through him, indicates that, if it is an exaggeration to say that the KJV was written for an audience of one, that particular reader loomed large in the thoughts of the translators. Again here we will draw out some key themes in the approach to translation in this text.

There are many similarities in the two translations. Like Luther, the KJV disdains the use of too many marginal comments. The translators allow themselves to indulge only where there are variant readings touching on nonessential doctrines. The Geneva Bible was marked by its many theological stage directions, indicating how the text was to be read in a duly Calvinist manner. In the preface to the Geneva Bible, the translators indicate that their approach was to have "faithfully rendered the text and in all hard places most sincerely expounded the same … as we have chiefly observed the sense, and laboured always to … [keep] the propriety of the words."[24] At the same time, they took care to add what they euphemistically called "brief annotations" to help the reader understand. The Geneva Bible, like Luther, has a particular theological framework, a set of convictions as to the core message of Scripture; but contrary to Luther, it relies heavily on the marginal notes rather than the translation itself to convey the convictions of the translators, who felt duty bound to translate the text in a fairly literal or exact way. Luther on the other hand relies more on the translation itself to carry the theological weight of conveying the true message of Scripture without extensive marginal notes, as he feels more free to depart from a literal translation for the purposes of idiomatic German expression of the message, and to convey the meaning behind the actual words.

The KJV translators take a different approach. Richard Bancroft's terse sixth rule for the translators had made the policy plain: "No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words, which cannot without some circumlocution so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text." The emphasis here is on "at all." There are to be no Calvinist marginal notes, nor for that matter, notes advocating royal supremacy either. The translation is to observe a strict neutrality. However, they omit marginal notes for different reasons from Luther, not because

they hope to convey a distinct theological context within the text of the translation, but because suggesting a distinct theological standpoint is not a primary consideration for them.

The "Epistle Dedicatory" to the preface to the KJV, written by Miles Smith, resident canon of Hereford Cathedral and soon to be bishop of Gloucester, positions the translation deliberately between the poles of early-seventeenth-century English religion:

> [I]f on the one side, we shall be traduced by popish persons at home or abroad, who therefore will malign us, because we are poor instruments to make God's holy truth to be yet more and more known unto the people, whom they desire still to keep in ignorance and darkness; or if, on the other side, we shall be maligned by self-conceited brethren, who run their own ways, and give liking unto nothing, but what is framed by themselves, and hammered on their anvil we may rest secure, supported within by the truth and innocency of a good conscience, having walked the ways of simplicity and integrity, as before the Lord; and sustained without by the powerful protection of your Majesty's grace and favour, which will ever give countenance to honest and Christian endeavours against bitter censures and uncharitable imputations.[25]

The path set out is not a theological, but a moral and spiritual one: "the ways of simplicity and integrity," duly guarded by royal protection. The aim is not a theological translation in the sense that Luther's is, but rather "simplicity and integrity": simplicity, a simple and understandable translation; and integrity, as accurate and faithful translation of the original texts as possible. The point is developed in Smith's preface where he explains the decision not to render each Hebrew or Greek word with exactly the same English word in each instance:

> [W]e have not tied ourselves to an uniformity of phrasing, or to an identity of words, as some peradventure would wish that we had done. … Thus to mince the matter, we thought to savour more of curiosity than wisdom, and that rather it would breed scorn in the Atheist, then bring profit to the godly reader. For is the kingdom of God become words or syllables? Why should we be in bondage to them if we may be free, use one precisely when we may use another no less fit, as commodiously?[26]

Here is a striving for an exact phrasing that does justice to the original, but that avoids a stilted awkwardness that would come from sticking to

the exact correspondence of each Hebrew or Greek word with the same English one on every occasion. The concern here is for two things: a "commodious" translation and a precise one. There is a delicate striving for a careful balance. On the one hand, if a word means the same, they feel they should translate it with the same word. However, they do not feel themselves tied to that as a rigid rule, because it then becomes "mincing the matter"—something "curious," odd, obscure.

Absent from both Bancroft's rules and Smith's preface is any sense of a distinct theological vision driving the translators. Naturally, Smith's slightly fawning address to King James shows that there will be little quarter given to Calvinist subversion of royal rule, and Bancroft's third rule for the translators[27] directed them to avoid Tyndale's separatist leanings; but apart from that, neither shows any interest in a driving prior understanding of the gospel, as lies behind both Luther's version and the Geneva Bible.

Also absent is any sense of a desire to express the Bible in colloquial English. Contrary to Luther, the selection of members of the companies of translators of the KJV focused on ability to handle the donor languages, rather than the receptor one. As Smith put it: "Therefore such were thought upon, as could say modestly with St Jerome: *Et Hebraeum sermonem ex parte didicimus, et in Latino paene ab ipsis incunabulis etc. detriti sumus.* (Both we have learned the Hebrew tongue in part, and in the Latin we have been exercised almost from our very cradle.)"[28] Jerome himself is praised as "the best linguist, without controversy, of his age, or of any that went before him."[29] It is these qualities, rather than familiarity with idiomatic English or even personal experience of grace that primarily qualifies a person to be a translator. In addition, the requirement to work from the Bishops' Bible, except where it was inadequate, led to the KJV retaining archaic forms of English that were in fact going out of use in the early seventeenth century, such as the personal forms of address: *thou, thee* and *thy*, instead of *you, your,* and *yours*.[30] Luther would never have allowed anything like this!

David Norton's analysis of the KJV concluded, "Textual accuracy, theological neutrality and political acceptability were the qualities desired, and the aim a single generally acceptable text."[31] And again, "the translators were not concerned with qualities in their English other than fidelity to the original."[32] The KJV shows no great interest in either a colloquial translation or a theological one.

A couple of examples will bear this out. Luther himself cites the angelic greeting to Mary in Luke 1:28 as a case in point where the Latin misses the mark. It may be worth laying out each version in turn to make the point:

> Greek: καὶ εἰσελθὼν πρὸς αὐτὴν εἶπεν, Χαῖρε, κεχαριτωμένη, ὁ κύριος μετὰ σοῦ.
> Vulgate: et ingressus angelus ad eam dixit: ave gratia plena, Dominus tecum benedicta tu in mulieribus.
> Luther: Und der Engel kam zu jr hin ein und sprach: Gegrüsset seistu holdselige.
> KJV: And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

Luther complains that the clumsy Latin "gratia plena" would make a German "think of a keg 'full of' beer or a purse 'full of" money."[33] His theological convictions wanted to avoid any sense that grace was a substance that could be dished out by the papacy in the form of indulgences, merits, and so on. Instead grace is simply God's favor toward us. So he feels free to depart from the Greek significantly, with his more colloquial "Gegrüsset seistu holdselige."

The KJV also departs from the Greek (and the Latin for that matter) but for different reasons. It has the phrase, "Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured." It uses six words to convey what the Greek does in two, the Latin in three, and Luther also in three. The KJV is striving for as faithful a rendering as possible, even indicating to the reader that the words "thou that art" are not strictly speaking there in the Greek by the use of roman type, rather than black letter type (in later versions italics) so that the reader can keep as close to the original as possible. They are content to expand the text, while avoiding the unfortunate spatial and substantial connotations of the Latin, and the chatty colloquialism of Luther. The resulting phrase, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured," sounds less idiomatic, yet still has a smooth rhythm, with syllabic variety and a certain literary beauty to it. The departure from exact rendering of the Greek is not for the sake of idiomatic English, but a certain precise dignity. It is a phrase that captures what Adam Nicolson calls the "passionate exactness" of the KJV.[34]

A different but equally illuminating example is Ps 58:9. In the KJV we find: "before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as in a whirlwind, both living and in his wrath." It is a sentence that has balance

and rhythm, is a fairly literal translation, yet it makes little sense. We can sense the perplexity of the translators; the Hebrew at this point is difficult to translate, as most modern versions acknowledge in marginal notes. Luther instead has "Ehe ewre Dornen reiff werden am Dornstrauche, wird sie dein zorn so Frisch wegreisen," or roughly translated, "Before your thorns have ripened on the thornbush, your wrath will tear them out while they are still green." Here Luther feels free to depart from the Hebrew to give a comprehensible sentence, while the KJV translators would prefer to offer something barely meaningful, yet closer to the original. Luther's version is idiomatic, conveys a clear idea of divine judgment—a depiction of the law, not the gospel. The KJV line is rhythmically balanced and flows delicately, yet has no theological idea driving it, and is happier to offer the reader what is on the page of the Hebrew, rather than forcing it into a colloquial phrase.

Conclusion: The Bible: Familiar or Strange?

Drawing this together, what can we conclude about the difference of approaches in these two translations, arguably the two most influential texts that emerged from the era of the Reformation?

Paul Ricoeur's essay "On Translation" argues that the perfect translation is a false ideal, born out of an Enlightenment confidence in the exact reference of language to meaning. The supposed dilemma between faithfulness to and betrayal of a text is a false one: every translation is in some sense a betrayal. We are to "give up the ideal of the perfect translation." In one sense, translation is impossible but we still do it.[35]

Luther probably would have agreed. For him, no translation is neutral. His version of the Bible is an unashamedly Lutheran one, conveying a particular understanding of the gospel, with justification by faith, law and gospel, the two kingdoms—all the classic Lutheran ideas running throughout. He also wants to make the biblical writers sound like Germans, to embed the text in the culture and language of his people and his time. It is a translation that makes the biblical text close, intimate, contemporary, blended with the language of the market and the home. In 1528 Luther wrote to Wenceslas Linck:

> We are sweating over the work of putting the Prophets into German. God, how much of it there is, and how hard it is to make these Hebrew writers talk German! They resist us, and do not want to leave their

> Hebrew and imitate our German barbarisms. It is like making a nightingale leave her own sweet song and imitate the monotonous voice of a cuckoo, which she detests.[36]

Just like contemporary artists who painted biblical scenes with characters in sixteenth-century clothes, Luther wants to overcome the sense of distance and unfamiliarity of the text, to help people find themselves and their language in the stories of the Bible, to make God speak German. It is a translation of immanence rather than transcendence, of incarnation into German culture that fits the christological core of his gospel.

The KJV translators on the other hand preserve more of the strangeness of the scriptural text. Here there is no attempt to make Amos sound like a Hampshire farmer or Luke a London physician. It makes the Bible (and perhaps God) seem less immediate, more alien, aloof, yet also more majestic, awesome, in the older sense of that word. Adam Nicolson argues that this English Bible refuses to make a choice between the Cavalier richness of ceremony and the Puritan austerity of simplicity.[37] What the KJV lacks is the intimacy of nearness, the sense that the Bible speaks our language, relates directly to our concerns—something that Luther's translation does more effectively.

The KJV trusts the readers more, offering them the information they need—as exact a translation as is possible while retaining a sense of style and "commodiousness." Unlike papally approved versions, the KJV translators were content to insert marginal notes indicating variant readings of a text, leaving uncertainties as uncertainties and giving the readers the opportunity to make up their own minds. It avoids controversy, refusing to side with a particular interpretation of the Bible, instead giving the readers room for maneuver, a classically Anglican thing to do.

The differences are of emphasis rather than total contrast. However, the two versions embody a number of different strands of the Reformation movement. If the Reformation was in part a democratization of religion, making it accessible and familiar, giving people a gracious God that they could love rather than fear, then Luther's translation conveyed all of that and more. At the same time, however, the Reformation also bequeathed a strong sense of freedom of conscience, of the exaltation of the laity, giving them every much of a right to read the Scripture and make up their mind about it as the priests and the scholars. And it is this aspect that is best preserved in the KJV. They also are products of their age. Luther's translation breathes the atmosphere of the early years of the Reformation, with

his initial confidence that the gospel had now been discovered and now needed only to be proclaimed far and wide for it to be welcomed and believed. The KJV breathes the more nervous and cautious air of a century later, a century of sobering division and dispute that made clear that biblical interpretation and finding unanimity was not as straightforward as it had seemed in those heady days of the 1520s.

Around forty years after the KJV was published, William Chillingworth wrote his famous line: "The Bible, I say, the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants."[38] It sounds like the kind of thing Luther would have said. However, Chillingworth probably meant it in a different way—that the Bible, rather than any particular interpretation of the Bible, is what Protestants cling to. That point Luther would not have agreed with. Therein lies the dilemma of the Reformation, and these two versions together capture both the richness and the vigor, yet also the tensions that lie at the heart of this movement that has shaped the modern world so extensively.

Notes

1. Heinz Bluhm, *Martin Luther: Creative Translator* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1965), ch. 9.

2. Martin Luther, *Word and Sacrament I* (ed. E. Theodore Bachamnn; vol. 35 of *Luther's Works*; Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1960), 250. (*Luther's Works*, henceforth LW.)

3. John L. Flood, "Martin Luther's Bible Translation in Its German and European Context," in *The Bible in the Renaissance: Essays on Biblical Commentary and Translation in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (ed. Richard Griffiths; Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2001), 48.

4. LW 35:188–89.

5. LW 35:193.

6. LW 35:214.

7. LW 35:189.

8. LW 35:252.

9. LW 35:198.

10. "We had to sweat and toil there before we got those boulders and clods out of the way, so that one could go along so nicely. The plowing goes well when the field is cleared. But rooting out the woods and stumps, and getting the field ready—this is a job nobody wants" (LW 35:188).

11. LW 35:194.

12. LW 35:195.

13. For example, in Luther's Romans commentary, when he writes of the believer, that "he is at the same time both a sinner and a righteous man; a sinner in fact, but a righteous man by the sure imputation and promise of God that He will continue to deliver him from sin until He has completely cured him. And thus he is entirely

healthy in hope" (*Lectures on Romans* [ed. Hilton C. Oswald; LW 25; St. Louis: Concordia, 1972], 260).

14. *Table Talk* (ed. Theodore G. Tappert; LW 54; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), 42.

15. LW 54:446.

16. LW 35:249.

17. Friedrich Kantzenbach makes this point, that it was the centrality of Christ to Scripture that shapes Luther's translation throughout: "Luther's Bible Translation is consequently the fruit of his struggle over the truth of the Gospel. It took a long journey until Luther could find *one* theme which Holy Scripture showed forth in all its variety, its different literary types and methods of teaching, namely Christ." Friedrich Kantzenbach, "Luthers Sprache Der Bibel," in *Martin Luthers Deutsche Bibel* (ed. Hans Volz; Hamburg: Friedrich Wittig, 1978), 13.

18. LW 54:446.

19. LW 35:213.

20. LW 35:194.

21. "Vivendo, immo moriendo et damnando fit theologus, non intelligendo, legendo aut speculando," *Archiv zur Weimarer Ausgabe* 2.296.8–11.

22. *Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 38–44* (ed. Jaroslav Pelikan; LW 7; St. Louis: Concordia, 1965), 175.

23. LW 35:194.

24. "Preface to the Geneva Bible, 1560," in *Documents of the English Reformation* (ed. Gerald Bray; Cambridge: James Clarke, 1994), 361.

25. Bray, *Documents*, 415–16.

26. Ibid., 434–35.

27. "Old ecclesiastical words to be kept, namely, as the word *church* not to be translated *congregation* etc."

28. Bray, *Documents*, 432.

29. Ibid., 423.

30. Alister McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 266–71.

31. David Norton, *A History of the Bible as Literature* (2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1:144–45.

32. Ibid., 157.

33. LW 35:191.

34. Adam Nicolson, *When God Spoke English: The Making of the King James Bible* (London: HarperCollins, 2003), 197.

35. Paul Ricoeur, *On Translation* (trans. Eileen Brennan; Thinking in Action; London: Routledge, 2006), 12.

36. LW 35:229.

37. Nicolson, *When God Spoke English*, 241.

38. William Chillingworth, *The Religion of Protestants* (London: Bell & Daldy, 1870), 463.

Revising the KJV: Seventeenth through Nineteenth Century

Harold P. Scanlin

The ink was barely dry on the first copies of the KJV when one of the translation committee's fiercest critics issued a pamphlet decrying its translation choices and recommending ten specific changes, enumerating ten examples of errors and urging that his corrections be sent to all churches that have bought Bibles. That critic was Hugh Broughton, generally considered to be one of the best Hebrew scholars of the day but also known to lack the temperament to be a part of a committee translation. His treatise, *A Censure of the Late Translation for Our Churches …* (1611), begins:

> The late Bible, Right Worshipful, was sent me to censure: which bred in me a sadness that will greeve me while I breath[e]. It is so ill done. Tell his Maiesty that I had rather be rent in pieces with wild horses, then [*sic*] any such translation by my consent be urged upon poore Churches. I will article [*sic*].[1]

Broughton had published his own translation of Job the previous year (1610) but died in 1612 without seeing the adoption of any of his recommended changes incorporated in the KJV. The book of Job and his other Bible translation efforts were published in *The Works of the Great Albionean Divine … Hugh Broughton*.[2]

Broughton's harsh rhetoric may seem overstated in the twenty-first century, but it may be matched by a letter I received while serving as the director of the American Bible Society Translations Department. A King James Only advocate requested, nay demanded, that ABS "correct" the change made in Job 41:18 from leviathan's "neesings" (as in the 1611 edition) to "sneezings" and send the corrected copies free of charge to all who

bought a KJV from ABS. The letter was adorned with their motto, "Read the Bible God uses, read the 1611 KJV."

Not all of the KJV's critics are as harsh as these two examples, but it amply demonstrates that there has been a centuries' long parade of calls for changes in the KJV.[3] Any accounting of these calls for change should be divided into two categories, albeit with some overlapping interests. One category may be described as recovering "authorial intent," or more precisely "translatorial intent."[4] By seventeenth-century standards and printing techniques, what David McKitterick calls the "innate instability of printed texts,"[5] the KJV was not immune to many typographical errors. Some errors could be generated by, for example, a publisher who would use more than one shop to do the typesetting for such a large book. After a sufficient number of sheets were run off the movable type could be broken down and used to typeset the next set of sheets.

One of the best known "obvious" errors is Ruth 3:15—"he" [Boaz] or "she" [Ruth] went into the city." Despite generally reliable efforts to identify KJV first editions and first printings, one should first state that not all "he" or "she" Bibles share all the same set of textual readings. Further, as David Norton points out, one can argue that the "translatorial intent" was to translate "he," rendering the literal Hebrew, even though "she" seems to be contextually more appropriate. Examples of other textual variants (mostly dealing with relatively minor issues) abound. Many major efforts to establish a text that comes closest to "translatorial intent" have been made, generally motivated by a series of publishers who wanted to produce an edition free of errors. These efforts in the publishing history of the KJV are well documented, most recently by Norton's *Textual History of the King James Bible*[6] as a companion to the *New Cambridge Paragraph Bible*. F. H. A. Scrivener, editor of the nineteenth-century *Cambridge Paragraph Bible,* also documented the history of variants in KJV editions. Briefly described, the major efforts at "revision" are as follows:

- 1629 (Cambridge folio; Herbert 424)[7] The first KJV printed at Cambridge was edited with a view toward correcting errors that had already found their way into earlier editions in less than twenty years.
- 1638 (Cambridge folio; Herbert 520) Completing the task of the 1629 project, "the authentique corrected *Cambridge Bible*" endeavored to make the use of italics more uniform. They also made some translational-exegetical changes, for example, "Is

not this the sonne of David" for "Is this …" in Matt 12:23; they added "of God" to "Hath not the Sonne …" in 1 John 5:12; "whom ye may appoint" for "whom we may appoint" in Acts 7:3.

- 1660 saw the appearance of two publications critiquing the KJV. They demonstrate two different approaches to "revision." William Kilburne's pamphlet, *Dangerous Errors in Several Late Printed Bibles,* points out some major typographical errors among the several KJV editions published in just under fifty years since 1611. The second critique is *An Essay toward the Amendment of the Last English Translation of the Bible … The First Part on the Pentateuch, or the Five Books of Moses* by Robert Gell. This collection of twenty sermons filling over eight hundred pages offers his opinion on translation and exegetical errors and calls for their correction in subsequent editions.
- 1717 (Oxford, Baskett; Herbert 942, 943) Though not overtly designed to be a revised text, John Baskett published a folio edition in two volumes (Old Testament in 1717 and New Testament in 1716). It was a work of great typographical beauty, sometimes described as "the most magnificent" of the Oxford Bibles. Unfortunately, it contained many typographical errors. It is known as "The Vinegar Bible," from an error in the headline of Luke 20, which reads "The parable of the vinegar," instead of "The parable of the vineyard." It was so carelessly printed that it was at once named "A Baskett-full of printers' errors." Baskett's effort illustrates the difficulty in maintaining an accurate text, even by a recognized publisher who had recently acquired a patent to print Bibles.
- 1762 (Cambridge, Francis Sawyer Paris [or Parris]; Herbert 1142) This edition exhibits further efforts to improve on the use of italics and amending punctuation and spelling.
- 1769 (Oxford, Benjamin Blayney; Herbert 1194) Blayney demonstrates that on the one hand there was a keen interest in establishing the best possible KJV text, while at the same time there was sentiment for a revised translation, which he realized when he published a new translation of Jeremiah and Lamentations based on newer approaches to Hebrew poetry and textual criticism.

Reflecting further advances on the Paris edition, Scrivener says Paris and Blayney were "the great modernizers of the diction of the version, from what it was left in the seventeenth century, to the state wherein it appears in modern Bibles."[8]

Calls for further efforts continued into the nineteenth century. For example, Thomas Curtis published in 1833 *The Existing Monopoly, an Inadequate Protection of the Authorized Version of Scripture*. Again, the concern was to correct typographical errors and editorial inconsistencies even though the Crown issued permission to a very limited number of printers. Whether or not in response to this treatise, Oxford did publish a KJV set in roman type (Herbert 1792) that was prepared with great care to conform to the 1611 edition.[9] Nevertheless, the Blayney edition held sway until the latter part of the nineteenth century with the appearance of the *Cambridge Paragraph Bible* (1873, Herbert 1995), which included Scrivener's lengthy introduction, later published separately (1884).

Noah Webster of American Dictionary fame was a champion of spelling reform. As early as 1789 he advocated phonetic spellings such as dropping silent letters and using "ee" instead of the diphthong "ea."[10] His rather radical spelling reform never succeeded, but later he turned his attention to revising the KJV with the dual purpose of standardizing the use of American spelling and the bowdlerizing of the text to make it more suitable, in his opinion, for the Bible's use in elementary education. The latter aim has not been perpetuated, although his Americanized spellings (color, honor, Savior) can be seen in many KJVs published in the United States. Webster's Bible is currently available in a reprint edition and online.[11]

One notable attempt to develop a new "standard" text was undertaken by the American Bible Society (ABS) in the 1850s. While commending the quality of the1833 roman font reprint and the careful work of Blayney, ABS felt that there was more work to do, especially in light of the variations among several KJV publishers, including their own and the British and Foreign Bible Society. Accordingly, a blue ribbon committee was formed, including many of the leading American biblical scholars of the day (e.g., Edward Robinson and John M'Clintock). Collation of these editions was begun in 1848, and between 1850 and 1857 ABS published several editions of their new "standard text" KJV. The revisions were based, in part, on the agreement of at least three model editions that were collated. Much effort was given to the "accessories of the text," including chapter summaries and revisions/modernizations of marginal notes.[12] These changes stirred up a controversy spearheaded by A. C. Coxe in *An Apology for the Common Eng-*

lish Bible; and a Review of the Extraordinary Changes Made by Its Managers of the American Bible Society.[13] Despite the fact that the changes introduced were quite modest by most publishing standards, public sentiment against the new standard text grew so large that ABS withdrew this edition and reverted to a more modest revision prepared by a new committee. Beginning in 1860 and continuing to 1932, this was the ABS standard text until another revision was done to incorporate more American orthography.

This incident in Bible publishing history illustrates that in at least some ecclesiastical circles there has always been a belief that the KJV text must be preserved in its "original" 1611 form without realizing that this is a complex undertaking with an elusive goal. It is not difficult to pick a page in the 1611 KJV and find two different spellings of the same word. Even by modern standards of typesetting some publishers are happy with a target of a 98 percent error-free text. Although discerning "translatorial intent" may be a worthy goal, sentiment to do real revision of the translation has persisted.

As noted earlier, calls for corrections and revisions of the KJV began as early as 1611. These calls continue even today. Motivations run the gamut from a theological assumption that the 1611 edition of the KJV was divinely inspired and needs to be preserved in that pristine state, while others desire, without any theological presupposition, to preserve this literary treasure of English language and culture. The former is represented by the King James Only movement, which has generated many tracts and books with a corresponding critique in evangelical circles.[14]

A second category of changes being called for reflect a willingness to do more than just recover "translatorial intent." From the seventeenth to the nineteenth century scholars and readers articulated the desire for both minor changes to correct perceived exegetical and translational mistakes and full revisions prompted by changes in the English language, discovery and reevaluation of base text witnesses as well as changes in theological perspectives. The seventeenth century was not without such calls, but the Enlightenment inspired more far-reaching revision efforts.

The Renaissance produced a series of great polyglot Bible editions, culminating in the appearance of the London Polyglot in the mid-seventeenth century under the editorship of Brian Walton. The polyglots brought to the attention of the academic world a growing variety of texts and textual variants. For example, the London polyglot included the first printed edition of the Samaritan Pentateuch. Scholars were slow to look at the Samaritan Pentateuch until Qumran biblical manuscripts demon-

strated that many nonsectarian Samaritan readings reflect ancient quality readings. Other extensive eighteenth-century collations of Hebrew manuscripts created a wealth of possibilities for those interested in emending the Old Testament base text. We now know that the manuscript evidence gathered by Kennicott and de Rossi contributes little to the establishment of the turn-of-the-era Hebrew text, but the published calls for revising the KJV frequently relied on Kennicott for their proposed changes. W. H. Roberts's *Corrections of Various Passages of the English Version of the Old Testament upon the Authority of Ancient Mss. and Ancient Versions* (published posthumously by his son in 1794) abounds in references to eighteenth-century textual scholars like Houbigant and Kennicott, as well as Blayney and Lowth, who used numerous readings from these sources in their translations of Jeremiah and Isaiah. This expanding corpus of ancient texts did not escape the purview of those interested in promoting better base texts for Bible translation. It should be noted, however, that the KJV translators themselves were well aware of text-critical issues and were prepared on occasion to depart from the published base texts they followed, namely the second rabbinic Bible and Beza (1598).[15]

One example of stylistic, exegetical, and textual revision is John Wesley's *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament*.[16] This may not be the most extensive attempt at revision but it is arguably the most popular of the eighteenth century. It was frequently reprinted starting in 1757, with further editions in 1760, 1790 (abridged), and 1837. The 1790 reprint was published under the title, *The New Testament, with an Analysis of the Several Books and Chapters*. Wesley describes his work as "chiefly for plain, unlettered men who understand only their Mother Tongue."[17]

Wesley's version is a limited revision of the King James Version, done with reference to the Greek text of Bengel (1734), and with selected renderings and annotations drawn from Bengel's *Gnomon* (1742) and other sources. Some estimates range as high as ten thousand or more changes, the vast majority of which are spelling and other minor corrections. Of primary interest here is Wesley's commitment to Bengel, who was a product of a rational Enlightenment approach combined with a German pietism that was committed to the recovery of the best original Greek New Testament text, using the best tools of the emerging science of textual criticism. Wesley described his approach to the base text: "Those various readings, likewise, which he [Bengel] has shown to have a vast majority of ancient copies and translations on their side, I have without scruple incorporated with the text."[18] Bengel cautiously departed from the Textus Receptus in a

few places, especially in the book of Revelation. Wesley followed Bengel's readings in Rev 22:14–21. Bengel devised a rating system with five categories: *alpha*—a decidedly preferable reading; *beta*—somewhat preferable; *gamma*—equally good; *delta*—somewhat inferior; and *epsilon*—wholly inferior.[19] Perhaps surprisingly, Bengel retained and defended the Trinitarian witnesses, and in his *Explanatory Notes* on 1 John 5:7–8 Wesley summarizes Bengel's argument. Most of the *Notes* were pious observations drawn largely from Bengel's *Gnomon*. Wesley's edition was widely used by Methodists, and the notes are still in print (both in abridged and unabridged editions), detached from the translation.[20]

One of the most comprehensive efforts to revise the KJV was carried out by William Newcome (1729–1800). In 1792 he published *An Historical Review of the English Biblical Translations*.[21] He followed this with the publication of his own translation: *An Attempt toward Revising Our English translation of the Greek Scriptures, and toward Illustrating the Sense by Philological and Explanatory Notes*.[22] His base text was Griesbach's Greek New Testament, which moved further than Bengel's in departing from the Textus Receptus, noting, for example, the late manuscript evidence to the "witnesses" in 1 John 5:7–8. Newcome had earlier published *An Attempt towards an Improved Version, a Metrical Arrangement, and an Explanation of the Twelve Minor Prophets* and *An Attempt towards an Improved Version, a Metrical Arrangement and an Explanation of the Prophet Ezekiel*.[23] The titles of these volumes provide a clue to Newcome's conviction that Enlightenment studies on Hebrew poetry, especially that of Robert Lowth, laid the foundation for a new approach to the translation of poetry that extends beyond Psalms into the prophets.[24] Newcome also offers in the commentary accompanying his translation various observations and proposals for revising and emending the Hebrew text.

Perceived theological bias in the KJV prompted Unitarians to appropriate Newcome's translation with modest revisions (1808). A lengthy critique of this translation was published in 1810 (2nd ed. 1814) by Edward Nares, *Remarks on the Version of the New Testament, Edited by the Unitarians. …*[25] Nares interacts positively in textual matters with Griesbach but dismisses many of his readings as trivial and unimportant. A rejoinder by Lant Carpenter, a Unitarian minister (1780–1840) appeared in 1820: *An Examination of the Charges Made against Unitarians and Unitarianism, and the Improved Version. …*[26]

Other critics argued that the KJV should be more concordant. But the KJV was not a concordant translation, as explained in "The Translators to

the Reader": "Reasons inducing us not to stand curiously upon an identity of phrasing" (Modern Form: "Reasons we do not insist pedantically on verbal consistency").[27]

The accumulation of calls to undertake a thorough revision by mid-nineteenth century prompted a serious effort to undertake a new translation for both British and American audiences. Arguments for and against revision are detailed in appendix A in Edwin Cone Bissell's *The Historic Origin of the Bible* (New York: Randolph, 1873), 345–97. His historical survey clearly summarizes the views of those who opposed and those who supported revision over the centuries. Calls for revision paved the way for the first major revision of the KJV, which began to appear in 1881 as the English Revised Version and its American counterpart, the American Standard Version, in 1901. The ERV/ASV was a scholarly success as it was based on a new understanding of the base texts and advances in biblical studies, both archaeological and exegetical. But it was in many ways a magnificent failure. The style was rather cumbersome and most of the public did not seem to care about textual criticism.[28] But the appearance of the ERV/ASV was a watershed event, demonstrating that ecclesiastical authorities could produce a new translation. If the ERV/ASV could not supplant the KJV it would pave the way for a host of new translations in the twentieth century. The twenty-first century will have to decide if it will ever be possible to produce a Bible translation that can come even close to the domination of the KJV, which endured for four centuries and still holds sway in many ways as *the* default translation of the English-speaking world. In some ways its "revisability" has contributed toward its continued viability.[29]

Appendix 1: William Newcome's "Rules for Conducting an Improved Version of the Bible"[30]

RULE I.
A translation of the bible should express every word in the original by a literal, verbal, or close rendering, where the English idiom admits of it.

RULE II.
Where the English idiom requires a paraphrase, the translator should endeavour so to form it as to comprehend the original word or phrase;

and the supplemental part should stand in Italics: except where harshness of language arises from pursuing this message.

RULE III.
Where a verbal translation cannot be thus interwoven, one equivalent to it, and which implies the reading in the original, should be substituted; and the idiom in the text should be literally rendered in the margin.

RULE IV.
The language of a biblical translation should be pure, or comfortable to the rules of grammar.

RULE V.
Propriety should be a prevailing character in the words and phrases of a biblical translation, that is, they should have the sanction of use, and the signification given to them should be warranted by the best speakers and writers.

RULE VI.
The simplicity of the present version should be retained.

RULE VII.
A translation of the bible should be perspicuous.

RULE VIII.
The same original word, and its derivatives, according to the different leading senses, and also the same phrase, should be respectively translated by the same corresponding English word or phrase except where a distinct representation of a general idea, or the nature of the English language, or the avoiding of an ambiguity, or elegance of style, or harmony of sound, requires a different mode of expression.

RULE IX.
The collocation of the words should never be harsh and unsuited to an English ear. An inverted structure may often be used in imitation of the original, or merely for the sake of rhythm in the sentence, especially in the poetical parts of scripture. However, the disposition should be determined by what is easy and harmonious in the English language, and not by the order of the words in the original, where this produces a forced arrange-

ment, or one more adapted to the license of our boldest poetry, than to prosaic numbers.

RULE X.
A suitable degree of beauty and elegance should be communicated to a translation of the bible.

RULE XI.
Dignity should characterise a version of the bible.

RULE XII.
Energy should be another characteristic of a biblical translation.

RULE XIII.
The old ecclesiastical terms should be continued, as *repentance, mystery, elect, predestinated,* &c.

RULE XIV.
Metaphors are, in general, to be retained, and the substitution, or unnecessary introduction, of new ones should be avoided.

RULE XV.
Proper names should remain as they are now written in those places where they are most correctly represented.

RULE XVI.
The best known geographical terms should be inserted in the text, and those of the original should stand in the margin. As *Syria* marg. *Aram, Ethiopia,* marg. *Cush.*

RULE XVII.
The language, sense, and punctuation, of our present version should be retained; unless when a sufficient reason can be assigned for departing from them.

RULE XVIII.
The critical sense of passages should be considered, and not the opinions of any denomination of Christians whatsoever.

RULE XIX.
Passages already admitted into the common version, but are allowed to be marginal glosses, or about the authenticity of which critics have reason to be doubtful, should be placed in the text within brackets.

RULE XX.
In the best editions of the bible, the poetical parts should be divided into lines answering to the metre of the original; or some other method should be used to distinguish them from prose.

RULE XXI.
Of dark passages, which exhibit no meaning as they stand in our present version, an intelligible rendering should be made on the principles of sound criticism.

Emendations founded on external authority will of course be preferred, and, when there is a choice of them, that particular one which furnishes the best sense, and most resembles the present text. When outward helps fail, recourse can only be had to the exigence of the place.

Appendix 2: Priestley's Rules[31]

A Plan to Procure a Continually Improving Translation of the Scriptures.

I. LET three persons, of similar principles and views, procure the assistance of a number of their learned friends, and let each of them undertake the translation of a portion of the whole Bible, engaging to produce it in the space of a *year.*

II. Let each of the translations be carefully perused by some other person than the translator himself; and especially let each of the three principals peruse the whole, and communicate their remarks to the translators.

III. Let the three principals have the power of making what alterations they please. But if the proper translator prefer his own version, let the three principals, when they print the work, insert his version in the notes, or margin, distinguished by his signature.

IV. If any one of the three differ in opinion from the other two, let his version be also annexed with his signature.

V. Let the whole be printed in one volume, without *any Notes,* except as few as possible, relating to the version, or the phraseology.

VI. Let the translators, and especially the three principals, give constant attention to all other new translations of the Scriptures, and all other sources of information, that they may avail themselves of them in all subsequent editions, so that this version may always be in a state of improvement.

VII. Let the three principals agree upon certain *Rules of Translating,* to be observed by all the rest.

VIII. On the death of any of the three principals, let the survivors make choice of another to supply his place.

IX. Let all the profits of the publication be disposed of by the three principals to some Public Institution in England, or any other part of the world; or in any other manner that they shall think most subservient to the cause of truth.

Rules of Translating.

I. LET the translators insert in the text whatever they think it most probable that the authors really wrote, if it has the authority of any ancient version or MS.; but if it differ from the present *Hebrew* or *Greek* copies, let the version of the present copies be inserted in the margin.

II. If the translators give the preference to any emendation of the text not authorized by any MS. or ancient version, let such conjectural emendation be inserted in the margin only.

III. Let the additions in the *Samaritan* copy of the *Pentateuch* be inserted in the text, but distinguished from the rest.

IV. Let not the present *English* version be changed, except for the sake of some improvement.

V. In the *Old Testament* let the word *Jehovah* be rendered *by* Jehovah, and also the word *Kurios* in the *New,* in passages in which there is an allusion to the *Old,* or where it may be proper to distinguish *God* from *Christ.*

VI. Let the present division of chapters be adhered to, with as little variation as possible, and the whole be divided into paragraphs, not exceeding about twenty of the present verses; but let all the present divisions of chapters and verses be noted in the margin.

VII. To each chapter let there be prefixed a summary of the contents, as in the common version.

Notes

1. Hugh Broughton, *A Censure of the Late Translation for Our Churches …* (Middleburg: R. Schilders, 1611), 1.

2. Collected by John Lightfoot (4 vols.; London: Ekins, 1662).

3. Any extensive study of the KJV and its revision needs to take into consideration the extensive marginal notes that accompanied the running text of the 1611 edition and many of its successors. It is a pity that most recent printings of the KJV do not include theses marginal notes. Calvin George has compiled an exhaustive listing of the marginal notes of the 1611 edition of the King James Bible: http://en.literaturabautista.com/node/54**.**

4. The use of the phrase "translatorial intent" should not imply that the final decisions of the translators in all cases were correctly rendered by the printers. But a study of these discrepancies will not be considered here.

5. David McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript, and the Search for Order, 1450–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 97.

6. David Norton, *A Textual History of the King James Bible* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). For Norton's discussion of the "he" and "she" editions, see 65.

7. Herbert numbers are from A. S. Herbert, *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of the English Bible: 1525–1961* (London: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1968).

8. F. H. A. Scrivener, *The Authorized Edition of the English Bible (1611): Its Subsequent Reprints and Modern Representatives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1884), 30.

9. Although not identified as such, the "1611" KJVs recently published by Nelson and Hendrickson seem to be facsimiles of this edition.

10. Noah Webster, "An Essay on the Necessity, Advantages, and Practicality of Reforming the Mode of Spelling and of Rendering the Orthography of Words Correspondent to Pronunciation," in *Dissertations on the English Language: With Notes, Historical and Critical, to Which Is Added, by Way of Appendix, an Essay on a Reformed Mode of Spelling, with Dr. Franklin's Arguments on That Subject* (Boston: Isaiah Thomas, 1789), 391, 393–94 (cf. also 394–98, 405–6): "It has been observed by all writers, on the English language, that the orthography or spelling of words is very irregular; the same letters often representing different sounds, and the same sounds often expressed by different letters. For this irregularity, two principal causes may be assigned: (1) The changes to which the pronunciation of a language is liable, from the progress of science and civilization. (2) The mixture of different languages, occasioned by revolutions in England, or by a predilection of the learned, for words of foreign growth and ancient origin. … The question now occurs; ought the Americans to retain these faults which produce innumerable inconveniencies in the acquisition and use of the language, or ought they at once to reform these abuses, and introduce order and regularity into the orthography of the AMERICAN TONGUE?"

11. *The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments, in the Common Ver-*

sion (1833; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988). Online: http://books.google.com/ as well as http://bible.christiansunite.com/webindex.shtml.

12. For a convenient summary of the process of revision and the negative reaction to the "standard" edition see Herbert, *Historical Catalogue,* 397–99.

13. (Baltimore: J. Robinson, Dana, 1857).

14. A lively debate among some fundamentalists and evangelicals focuses on King James Onlyism. One King James preservation argument put forth by Edward F. Hills, a Harvard PhD in textual criticism, pressed his logic of preservation to the extent that he argues for divine preservation of some Vulgate readings through Erasmus.

15. For a helpful list of likely text-critical decisions made in the Old Testament, see James D. Price, *King James Onlyism: A New Sect* (Chattanooga: Tennessee Temple University, 2006), ch. 13: "Textual Emendations Were Made in the King James Version" (277–94); and "Appendix I: Textual Emendations in the Authorized Version" (559–90).

16. (London: William Boyer, 1755).

17. *New Testament* (London: at the New Chapel, 1790), iii.

18. John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* (2nd ed.; London: n.p., 1757), iv–v.

19. How closely did Wesley follow the critical decisions of Bengel? I compared the four *alpha* readings and the 43 *beta* readings of Bengel in Matthew and found that in virtually every case that clearly involved translation, Wesley has followed Bengel. For example, Wesley follows all *alpha* readings: in Matt 1:18, omitting *Iēsou*; in 21:30, substituting *hetero*; and in 23:8, substituting *didaskalos.* Wesley also adopted most of Bengel's *beta* readings. But in Matt 6:25 Wesley retains *kai ti piēte* against Bengel. Are we giving Wesley too much credit for recognizing that Bengel's evidence for omission, as cited in his notes, is meager against printed editions and manuscript evidence? Even today there is little external evidence for omission. A theological conservatism may be involved in one of the three other rejected beta readings in Matthew. Wesley retains the harmonistic *ti me legeis agathon; oudeis agathos ei mē heis ho theos* at Matt 19:17. Regarding 1 John 5:7–8, Wesley says in his note, "What Bengelius has advanced, both concerning the transposition of these two verses, and the authority of the controverted verse … will abundantly satisfy any impartial person." He is also happy to drop, with Bengel, *ieremiou* at Matt 27:9. With few exceptions, Wesley clearly was prepared to bring to the people the latest and best of textual research, based primarily on the work of Bengel. Robin Scroggs concludes: "Part of the Methodist leader's genuis consisted in his accurate judgment of the quality of others' work, for Bengel was by no means as highly regarded in his own day as in ours" ("John Wesley as Biblical Scholar," *Journal of Bible and Religion* 28 [1960]: 416). Wesley also followed the improved punctuation of Bengel's edition. In Matt 27:42 Wesley translates "… cannot he save himself?"

20. For a comparison of Wesley's version with the King James Version, see George C. Cell, ed., *John Wesley's New Testament, Compared with the Authorized Version* (Philadelphia: Winston, 1938). Online: http://www.bible-researcher.com/bib-w.html.

21. William Newcome, *An Historical View of the English Biblical Translations: The Expediency of Revising by Authority Our Present Translation and the Means of Execut-*

ing Such a Revision (Dublin: Exshaw, 1792). See appendix 1 for the text of Newcome's 21 Rules. (See rule 18 on "critical sense.")

22. (Dublin: Exshaw, 1796).

23. The former was published in London, 1785; the latter in Dublin, 1788.

24. Lowth's lectures were originally published in Latin in 1753, then translated as *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews* (trans. G. Gregory; London: Tegg, 1787).

25. (2nd ed.; London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1814).

26. (Bristol: 1820).

27. Erroll F. Rhodes and Liana Lupas, eds., *The Translators to the Reader: The Original Preface of the King James Version of 1611 Revisited* (New York: American Bible Society, 1997), 83.

28. But the public press did react quite negatively to the text-critical "liberties" taken by E. J. Goodspeed in his *American Translation*. In his autobiography (*Things Seen and Heard* [1925; repr., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953], 176), he quotes this telling review from the *Indianapolis Star* of September 2, 1923: "Nothing stops his devastating pen. He has even abbreviated the Lord's Prayer, a petition not so long originally but that hustling, hurrying Chicagoans could find time for it, if they ever thought of prayer. It is a petition that in its present wording has been held sacred for nearly two thousand years, for the King James translators are said to have made no changes."

29. Joseph Priestly proposed a new approach to doing a "continually improving" translation, a scholar's delight but a publisher's nightmare. The full text of Priestley's Rules are given in appendix 2. Despite the fact that Priestley's work had little impact in his day, his rules share many approaches to translation revision today. See Marilyn Brooks, "Priestley's Plan for a Continually Improving Translation of the Bible," *Enlightenment and Dissent* 15 (1996): 89–106. "Abstract: The translation Joseph Priestley proposed was to be a translation by learned friends of free inquiry, needed because no steps are taken by authority to correct it, or to make a new one. Its distinguishing feature was that it should always be in a state of improvement rather than being definitively improved. The initial plan was that Priestley would take responsibility for the Hagiographa or Sacred Writings; Michael Dodson was engaged for the Prophets; Theophilus Lindsey for the NT and William Frend for the historical books. These four would oversee contributions of selected and cooperative acquaintances. What emerges from the correspondence is a great sense of camaraderie enhanced by the need for secrecy."

30. Newcome, *Historical View*, 256–381; Newcome's rules with examples.

31. Joseph Priestly, *The Theological and Miscellaneous Works of Joseph Priestley* (25 vols. in 26; London: Smallfield, 1817–1832), 17:532–33.

The Role of the Metatexts in the King James Version as a Means of Mediating Conflicting Theological Views

Jacobus A. Naudé

Translations of sacred texts have often been accompanied by metatexts, which function to guide the reader in interpreting the text. The King James Version as it was originally published in 1611 included various kinds of metatexts. This paper examines three metatexts—two metatexts consisting of the two prefaces found in the preliminaries, and the set of marginal notes accompanying the translation. One preface was a three-page dedication to the king. A second, eleven-page preface to the translation articulated the aims and goals of the translators with great clarity. It also carefully specified the nature of the marginal notes as metatexts—no marginal notes were allowed except for explanations of Greek and Hebrew words that could not be easily expressed in the text.

Prior to the translation, there had been serious tensions between Anglicans and Puritans that could have torn England apart had they been handled badly. Aware of the importance of maintaining religious peace, James decided at the Hampton Court Conference of 1604 to make at least some conciliatory gesture by commissioning a new Bible translation to unite them around a common English Bible.

My analysis of these two prefaces and a selection of the marginal notes as metatexts will show that they utilize the technique of keeping silent about contemporary issues while focusing instead on the basic principles of translation similar to those advocated by modern translation theorists. Thus these metatexts of the King James Version regulated the reader's mental preparation for a translation that, on the one hand, kept open interpretive questions and, on the other hand, diverged from the accepted Puritan interpretations as promoted in the metatexts of the Geneva Bible.

As a result, these metatexts served as a subtle but powerful tool for mediating conflicting theological views.

1. Introduction

Not everything in a source text can be rendered in a translation; because of the dynamics of language, it is impossible ever to relate everything. This fact foregrounds the agency role of the translator, who has to decide on the interplay between source text and target text and then choose which features of the source text merit greater prominence in the translation.[1] There is thus no neutral translation; the question is not *whether* the translator is ideologically involved in the text, but *how*.

Every choice in translation acts as a kind of index that activates a narrative, a story of what the world or some aspect of the world is like. The point, then, is not to treat any specific translational choice as random but rather as embedded in, and contributing to, the elaboration of a concrete social reality.[2] Structures of anticipation (or frames) can be created that guide the interpretation of these choices. According to Mona Baker, processes of framing can draw on practically any linguistic or nonlinguistic resource to set up an interpretive context for the reader or hearer.[3] In translations, these may include exploiting metalinguistic or paralinguistic devices. Metatexts are supplemental materials that create a frame to guide the reader in interpreting the translation. Metatexts include prefaces, dedications, introductions; subject headings, titles of books/chapters; marginal notes, footnotes, endnotes; illustrations; indices, addenda, and visual presentation (typeface, printing layout, etc.). Metatexts are useful precisely because they trace the contours of literary ideology and expose the sociocultural context that commands literary exchanges. Metatexts can provide an important overview of the ideological context of the translation and of the expectations of the readers. A metatext also has the function of calling attention to the translator as cosigner of the work and his/her intervention in the work.[4]

As far as sacred texts are concerned, readers are preoccupied with the transmission of the "correct" meaning. Any translation diverging from the accepted interpretation is likely to be deemed heretical and to be censured or banned. Translators often defend themselves and their translations by utilizing metatexts to (re)frame the translations of sacred texts and to narrate the nature of the specific translation.[5]

In addition to the marginal notes, the original publication of the KJV in 1611 included twelve preliminaries consisting of seventy-four pages.[6] This front matter consisted of the following:

- a title page (including the work of Flemish artist Cornelius Boel) and an indication that it was "appointed to be read in churches"[7]
- a dedicatory epistle to King James (probably written by Thomas Bilson, bishop of Winchester)
- a preface from the translators to the reader (by Miles Smith of the First Oxford Company, the company responsible for the Old Testament from Isaiah to Malachi, and who was on the Committee of Revisers)
- a calendar
- an almanac for thirty-nine years
- a table for the calculation of Easter
- a table and calendar setting out the order of Psalms and lessons to be said at morning and evening prayers throughout the year
- a list of the books of the Testaments and the Apocrypha
- the royal coat of arms of James I, and the Latin phrase *Cum privilegio Regiae Maiestas*, indicating that the translation was printed "by the authority of the king"
- genealogies from Adam to Christ (compiled by the antiquarian John Speed in collaboration with the Hebraist Hugh Broughton)[8]
- a table of place names in Canaan
- a map of Canaan begun by John More, a learned clergyman, and finished by John Speed

By analyzing a selection of metatexts of the King James Version (or Authorised Version)—especially the dedication, the preface, and the marginal notes—I will show how they were constructed to serve as subtle but powerful tools for mediating between conflicting theological views and uniting religious parties around a single English Bible. By utilizing a technique of keeping silent about contemporary issues and instead focusing on the basic principles of translation, the metatexts regulate the reader's mental preparation for a translation that diverges from the accepted sectarian interpretations in order to ensure that broader, nonsectarian

interpretations will be considered orthodox. In this respect, the King James translation adopted a stance toward both metatext and translation strategy that was diametrically opposed to that of the Geneva Bible, even though much of the specific wording of the KJV was drawn from the Geneva Bible.

The outline of the paper is as follows: the exposition begins with a few statements about the background of English Bible translations as a source of religious division,[9] followed by a description of the visual presentation of the KJV as compared with the existing Bible traditions. Then the two prefaces, the dedication to the king and "The Translators to the Reader," are analyzed, followed by an analysis of the marginal notes.

2. The English Bible Translations as a Source of Religious Division

When James VI of Scotland became James I of England in 1603, the Elizabethan era (1558–1603) was just ending. The pre-Jacobean period was shaped not only by the struggles between monarchy and democracy, the balancing of tolerance and intolerance, and the separation of Protestant and Roman Catholic, but also by battles within Protestantism. The Puritans were loyal to the Crown but wanted even more distance from Rome. The Presbyterians were Puritans who were ready to do away with the hierarchical structure of powerful bishops. The Pilgrims, including Nonconformists and Separatists, wanted the state out of church affairs. All of these Protestant groups opposed the Church of England bishops (the Prayer Book defenders or the Protestant hierarchy).[10]

Among religious parties in England, the text of the Bible was a source of division rather than a bond of unity.[11] Although the Bishops' Bible (in print 1568–1617), translated under the direction of Matthew Parker, archbishop of Canterbury, was the official version of the established church, the Puritan's Geneva version (in print 1560–1644) enjoyed broad popularity as the most widely read Bible of the Elizabethan era and subsequently of the Jacobean era. The Geneva Bible was the production of exiles who fled England for refuge within the Protestant havens of Europe in the first years of Mary Tudor's reign. It broke new ground and set new standards in biblical translation, illustration, and layout. Its numerous features—such as the marginal comments—propelled it to the forefront of English Bible translations, and it was the undisputed market leader. The Great Bible (in print 1539–1569) and its officially sanctioned successors were powerless to

meet the challenge posed by the Geneva Bible, which was the product of private enterprise and religious enthusiasm on the part of a small group of English Protestant exiles in the city of Geneva.[12] It offered comments on the text, which often expressed the radical Protestant ideas associated with Geneva at this time.

Meanwhile the translation of the Bible used in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer (1549, revised 1552, 1559) was under criticism for its inaccuracies. In addition, with their persecution under Elizabeth, the Catholics felt the need for their own translation to counter the increasingly popular Protestant editions. Roman Catholic scholars who had fled to the Continent published the Rheims-Douay New Testament in 1582 and the Old Testament in 1609. Its reception in England was comparable to that of the Tyndale New Testament. Copies were burned, and its owners, usually priests, were imprisoned and tortured.[13] These tensions between Anglicans and Puritans (who insisted that the Reformation in England did not go far enough and that the Church of England retained too many Catholic elements), on the one hand, and Catholics, on the other hand, could have torn England apart had they been handled badly.

The announcement that James VI of Scotland was to succeed Elizabeth caused undisguised delight in Puritan circles in England. James has been baptized a Catholic and crowned king of Scotland as a Protestant (John Knox preached at his coronation) when he was thirteen months old. He was raised by neither his mother nor his father, but only by regents, since his mother, Mary Queen of Scots, was forced to abdicate and was imprisoned. His regents played critical roles in his upbringing. From a very early age, he learned Latin and Greek. He read prolifically and became an articulate intellectual leader. He was selected by Elizabeth I of England, who had no offspring, to succeed her as king of England. His education and experience, having already been the king of Scotland, boded well for him. Yet the reality of the situation was very different. James disliked Presbyterianism; and, believing passionately that his royal authority was dependent upon bishops, he lobbied for the retention of episcopal governance of the church.[14]

In order to reconcile the differences of the various religious parties, the king called for a conference at Hampton Court in January 1604.[15] He took complete control of managing that meeting with both the Anglican bishops and the Puritans. After much inconclusive debate, John Rainolds (or Reynolds) of Oxford and a spokesperson for the Puritan group suggested making a new translation that could be approved by the whole

church. Aware of the importance of maintaining religious peace, James decided to make at least some conciliatory gesture by commissioning a new Bible translation, thereby surprising the bishops and delighting the Puritans by the strength and direction he gave this matter. His goal was to unite the religious factions around a common English Bible. He accomplished a measure of religious unity directly and immediately with the composition of the translation teams (established in six "companies": two at Oxford, two at Cambridge, and two at Westminster) and the setting up of the translation process with each group reviewing the other.[16] The translation brief for the companies was not merely to work together but to produce a Bible of solid academic standards, closely controlled by the Hebrew and Greek texts, and one that could be read in the churches.

The use of teams of individuals is one of the KJV's innovations in translation. The teams were given fifteen rules, possibly drafted by Bishop Richard Bancroft but certainly supervised by James. Most of these rules were followed, as can be seen in the 1618 eight-point summary by Samuel Ward, one of the translators, for the Synod of Dort with respect to the Dutch Statenvertaling of 1637. The rules stated the necessity of using the Hebrew and Greek originals. This dependence on Hebrew and Greek originals, as opposed to the Latin, generated the debates between Catholic and Protestant and, indeed, drew the Puritans and Anglicans closer together. The scholarly credentials behind the KJV were not doubted, because the companies could command "any learned man in the land" to respond to questions they could not answer. However, it took decades for the KJV to displace the Geneva Version in popular acceptance. As late as 1659 the Reverend Doctor Robert Gell, minister of the parish of St. Mary, Alder-Mary, London, published an eight-hundred-page treatise denouncing it and discussing its faults in detail, counting among them a denial of Christ's authority.

In what follows I will show how the appeal of the familiar in the visual presentation of the KJV regulated the reader's mental preparation so that the translation would be considered orthodox.

3. The Visual Presentation of the King James Version as an Appeal of the Familiar

To exude the appeal of the familiar, the visual presentation of the KJV was drawn from the history of Bible presentation, which culminated in the Geneva Bible and the latest version of the Bishops' Bible (1568).[17] For exam-

ple, on the first page of Genesis, both the KJV and the Geneva Bible contain the same heading—"The creation of the world." In both translations, the name of the book is "The First Book of Moses, called Genesis." In both translations, chapters begin with subject headings that are formatted similarly, even when their specific content differs. The artwork around the display capital of the first letter of the book of Genesis as well as the format of the columns and marginal notes are similar. The Geneva Bible also contains a dedication to the monarch and a preface to the readers. The 1526 edition of the New Testament by William Tyndale already contains a brief epistle "To the Reder," which was placed at the end of the printed translation.[18]

The KJV follows the standard Protestant order of the books, with the Apocrypha given separately, a tradition that originated with Jerome. The columns of text are similar to early Greek manuscripts and the marginal annotations to the Hebrew texts with the Masora. It follows the chapter numbers of Stephan Langton, archbishop of Canterbury early in the thirteenth century, and headers and verse divisions of Robert Estienne in 1540 and 1551. Along with these general features went the particular practices of the King's Printer, Robert Barker. Every feature of the King James Version as a piece of printing was present in the 1602 Bishops' Bible, even the use of printed lines to frame the columns of text and the margins.[19] The same pertains to the preliminaries. "A table and calendar setting out the order of Psalms and lessons to be said at morning and evening prayers throughout the year" set out the principles for ensuring that all the required biblical passages were read at the appropriate times as set out in the Book of Common Prayer. The inclusion of this table in the King James Bible as well as the "calendar" and "an almanac for thirty-nine years," indicating important dates and events in the church calendar, represented a defeat for the Puritan party, which disliked orchestrated readings and prayers. However, in the "List of the Books of the Testaments and the Apocrypha," the titles of two apocryphal books seem to have been adjusted to acknowledge Puritan sensitivities: the "Historie of Susanna" appears here as the "Story of Susanna," and the abbreviated title of "Bel and the Dragon" is rendered emphatically as "The idole Bel and the Dragon." By including, on the one hand, metatexts reflecting and facilitating worship in the Church of England while, on the other hand, adjusting the wording of two metatexts (the titles of two apocryphal books), the translators of the KJV presented an evenhanded and diplomatic approach to the contradictory sensibilities of the Puritans and the Anglicans.

The title page and Speed's genealogies are novel in the King James Bible, but all the other preliminary matter was familiar from previous

translations of the Bible. Thus *visually* the first edition of the King James was both new and familiar.[20] The KJV was presented as a lightly polished revision of the latest version of the Bishops' Bible (1568), which was the second "authorized" version.

Later editions of the King James Bible do not preserve the preliminaries except the lists of books in the Testaments. Some editions print the dedicatory epistle to King James and a few include the epistle from the translators to the reader, but the other preliminaries have all disappeared. One disappeared after it was out of date—the almanac, which was valid only for 39 years, from 1603 through 1641. Some of the preliminaries were provided for in the 1662 edition of the Book of Common Prayer. Thus it is fair to assume that after fulfilling the functional role to regulate the reader's mental preparation for a translation to be considered orthodox, the preliminaries and even the marginal notes were removed, that is, when the KJV was accepted as authoritative (and even considered authoritative as an original and not a translation).[21]

In the next two sections I will show how two metatexts in the form of prefaces, namely the dedication to King James and "The Translators to the Reader," regulated the KJV's first readers' mental preparation for translations in order to ensure that KJV would be considered orthodox.

4. The Divine Rule of the King as Base of Authority of the King James Version

The four-page dedication to King James (of which the actual type is larger than the type anywhere else in the 1611 edition) was probably written by Thomas Bilson, Oxford scholar, theologian, bishop of Winchester, and one of the two final revisers.[22] He was a translation coordinator but not a translator. However, he carried impressive weight in the ecclesiastical community. In the preface, Bilson pays homage to visible majesty, and does so with eloquence befitting King James.

The KJV was shaped by significant people, not least the king himself. In the dedication King James is described as "the principal mover and author[23] of the work": this is meant to imply that it was his commission that made it happen. He is further praised for his "vehement and perpetuated desire of the accomplishing and publishing of this work."

Political and religious unity were to be achieved through the person of the monarch and through a single version of the Bible, issued with royal authority. This ideology was promoted by the visual statement of

the king (Henry VIII) giving the Bible to his people as depicted on the title page of the Great Bible (1539) in the artwork by Hans Holbein (the first "authorised" version). The image projected is that of a unified nation, united under the monarch and the Bible, in which church and state work harmoniously together. The church upholds the monarchy and the monarchy defends true religion. It is an icon of a godly state and church under their supreme head, who in turn acknowledges his obligations to God, expressed in the Bible. The social ordering of England was thus affirmed every time the Great Bible was opened on a church lectern.[24]

This view of the authority of the monarch is supported by other cases. While in Basel, John Calvin wrote *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, dedicated to the king of France, in which he set out clearly the main ideas of the French Reformation.[25] It was published in Latin in May 1536. By using the authority of the king, Calvin's intention was both to refute his many critics within France, and to set out clearly and attractively the leading themes of Protestant theology.

Other English Bible translations also situated themselves with respect to the monarchy. With a sense of political savvy, Miles Coverdale cultivated support from the royal family as powerful protectors of his Bible translation (1535). It includes an elaborate dedication to King Henry VIII.[26] The dedication cites Henry's second wife, Anne (Boleyn), who had long supported Coverdale's work on the Bible. After Henry's divorce from Anne and her eventual execution, surviving copies show a correction of "Anne" to "Jane" (Seymour), Henry's third wife. However, her arrest and execution prevented the king from officially authorizing the Bible she had supported.[27]

Aware of the importance of the religious reforms introduced by Elizabeth I, William Whittingham (ca. 1524–1579), the leading translator of the Geneva Bible (1560) and John Calvin's brother-in-law, included a dedicatory epistle to the English monarch, praising her explicitly for her many religious virtues. The none-too-subtle subtext of this dedicatory epistle could hardly be missed: Whittingham wanted his translation to be the Bible of choice for use in churches, to be the people's Bible. A portrait of Elizabeth I also adorned the title page of the Bishops' Bible (1568).[28] Thus both translations appealed to the monarch for support and endorsement.

Through the dedication of the new translation to King James in the language and style of dignified flattery, the intent was to achieve political and religious unity through the person of the monarch and through a single version of the Bible, issued with royal authority. Even the actual type in the dedication is larger than the type anywhere else in the 1611

Bible. The "unity factor" is perceived in the statement that qualifies King James: "to the most high and mighty prince, James, by the grace of God king of Great Britain, France, and Ireland." At that time, the country of Great Britain existed only in the mind of King James. He wanted England and Scotland to unite, but they were not to do so until 1707, almost a century later. The claim to the throne of France was the vestige of a claim first made in 1340. The mention of Great Britain, France, and Ireland suggests that instead of merely enjoying the glory of the realm left behind by the former queen, he will take his subjects to an even greater glory, by observing his duty to God as their prince. He is further praised for his care for the church "as a most tender and loving nursing father," alluding to Isa 49:23. The two realms (kingdom and church) are not sharply distinguished but are rather depicted as caught up together. On the surface, the dedication both panders to and glorifies the king. The subtext of the dedication subtly admonishes him to impose his firm rule over the realm.[29]

The translation is offered to the king and his authorization is sought rather than assumed. The dedication is begging for his "approbation and patronage," which is provided by way of silence—the authorization is never denied or officially declared by James. There is no evidence that the translation ever received a definite ecclesiastical or legislative sanction.[30] However, it certainly had the king's blessing, and to call it an authorized version does not seem a misrepresentation. Bilson cites the king as the protector, the defender of faith: fear of attack by "Popish persons" and "self-conceited Brethren, who run their own ways, and give liking unto nothing but what is framed by themselves, and hammered on their anvil," will be prevented or nullified if King James gives his approval. The dedication concludes with a blessing on James.

The dedication to King James prepares the reader mentally to accept the translation as the version to be used by all English-speaking subjects of King James, regardless of their religious party. The idea of divine rule by monarchs and the special dedication to King James provides authority to this translation. The King James Version would be His Majesty's version of Scripture.

5. The King James Version Embodied the Basic Practice of Bible Translation

The second preface ("The Translators to the Reader") is an eleven-page introduction to the translation in which the intentions, concerns, method-

ologies, and uncertainties of the translators are articulated with great clarity.[31] This preface was written by Miles Smith, later the bishop of Gloucester. Smith was an orientalist and a member of the first Oxford Company of translators, which was responsible for translating the Old Testament books of Isaiah through Malachi, and also one of the two final revisers of the version.[32] This preface is all about the obligation of the translators to the enterprise of translation. It is the most important part of the preliminary material that appeared in the original edition of 1611 because of what it has to say about the nature of the Bible in general and of the translation in particular. It embodies the most cogent description of the practice and activity of Bible translation since the long description in the *Letter of Aristeas*.[33] It is written in a heavy and dense style, and because of its length it is rarely reprinted.

Rhodes and Lupas as well as Newman and Houser characterize the second preface as an apologia or defense (of the necessity for a translation).[34] The point being made is that the translation now being set before the public can be thought of as representing the best possible distillation of the wisdom, grace, and beauty of existing translations, corrected where necessary against the original biblical documents in their original languages.[35] The origins of the KJV are not to be seen in Puritan concerns over the accuracy of existing translations, or the need to ensure that the biblical translations included in the Prayer Book were reliable. The credit for the decision to translate is firmly given to James himself: "did his Majesty begin to bethink himself of the good that might ensue by a new translation, and presently after gave order for this Translation which is now presented unto thee." The translation of the Septuagint was similiarly initiated by a king, Ptolemy II Philadelphus, who is treated with flattering detail in the Letter of Aristeas, as is the case with James I in the dedication. Although a pagan (but at least by descent a royal Greek rather than an Egyptian), Ptolemy received the benefit of God's divine intervention. This stirred in him the spirit to prepare a whole Bible for the Gentiles. So too James was visited by God's spirit to promote a new, authorized version.[36]

The preface mediated the religious issues in the following ways. The preface begins with an acknowledgment that no worthy undertaking is without the risk of opposition and misunderstanding. The translators were well aware that the king's desire to promote the welfare of the church could be met with suspicion and resentment, whereas his primary concern was for the Word of God to be clearly understood. Miles Smith stressed the immense spiritual richness of the Bible and its central place in Christian life and thought for spiritual growth, personal integrity, and

doctrinal correctness. To achieve this purpose, the preface argued, a new translation is necessary. An overview of the history of the ancient translations (Hebrew into Greek and Hebrew and Greek into Latin and the "vulgar" tongues) is provided to illustrate that translating the Scriptures into the common language of a people is not the novel invention of a modern generation, but both traditional and integral to the history of evangelism. That the translations were imperfect and unsatisfactory led to further attempts to replace earlier translations. Yet with all the imperfections, each translation was acknowledged as the Word of God and was used to the glory of God in evangelism. The translators criticized church leaders who would protect the Scriptures by limiting them to Latin.

The translators had been pressed by the Protestants as well as the Catholics to justify the new (re)translation: Why was a new translation necessary, and if the translations were good, why should they now be emended?

For Protestants the preface indicated, first, that perfection is not achieved "at a single stroke" and that a good translation may be improved "as gold shines more brightly with rubbing and polishing." There were at least three different attempts to revise or replace the Septuagint because of all its imperfections; a new English translation should be understood as similarly appropriate. Second, historically it was their complaints at Hampton Court about the corrupt state of the Book of Common Prayer that had prompted the king to sponsor a revision.

For Catholics, the preface answered their concerns as follows. First, regardless of the skill of the interpreters who render it in their respective languages (German, French, Italian, or Latin), the king's speech in Parliament is still the king's speech and therefore a translation can still be the Word of God. Second, they argued that the truth of Protestant versions can be tested. Third, against the complaint that Protestant versions are so often changed and revised, the preface pointed to the great variety of editions of the Latin Bible sanctioned by Roman authority.

The purpose of the translators as described in the preface was in effect to take up the mantle of Tyndale, who produced the first printed English Bible of 1535 and its further modifications in various other translations—Matthew's Bible (1537), Taverner's Bible and the Great Bible (1539), the Geneva Bible (1560), and the Bishops' Bible (1568). The translators were instructed to start with the Bishops' Bible, and to test it carefully against earlier English translations, and especially against the text in its original languages. To this end they made use of all the resources available to them: linguistic tools, ancient as well as modern Bible versions and

commentaries, especially noting the resources available in the Spanish, French, Italian, and German ("Dutch") languages.

When citing from the Bible, the preface itself chose to use the Geneva translation rather than the new translation that the preface was intended to introduce and commend.[37]

The preface describes two matters concerning the editorial policy of the translators. The first concerned the use of marginal notes where there is uncertainty about the wording of the original text or about its interpretation.[38] The translators were aware that some persons might fear that such notes would bring into question the authority of the Scriptures, but they were convinced that such notes were necessary. Alternative readings having a claim to authenticity were to be indicated. The second matter concerned the degree of verbal consistency to be observed in translation.[39] The translators do not insist pedantically on verbal consistency. Truth is not tied to particular words. They examined the words of the originals with immense subtlety; they chose their words with fidelity, precision, and sensitivity; but they caution against taking them too absolutely. The translators avoided the jargon of both the Puritans and the Roman Catholics. Their aim—like Tyndale's—was to be faithful to the language of the originals and comprehensible to everybody.

After these observations the preface concludes with an exhortation to the reader to take the Bible seriously to heart.

The preface keeps silent about contemporary issues that divided the church. By focusing on the basic principles of translation, the potential and shortcomings of translations, as well as the nature of translated texts, the preface mentally prepares the reader to consider the new translation, that is, the King James Version, as orthodox.

6. The Antimarginal Note Policy of the King James Version as a Silencing Tool

Another way in which the translators mediated the conflict was to restrict the nature of the marginal notes. As explained in "The Translators to the Reader," notes were restricted to mainly three kinds. An asterisk in the text (5,200 cases) alerts the reader to cross-references in the margin where related passages are indicated. A dagger in the text (about 4,000 passages) indicates a note providing the Hebrew form of a word, the Hebrew meaning of a word or phrase, or the literal form of a Hebrew idiom underlying the translation. There are also more than 2,500 Old Testament passages

where parallel vertical bars point to some comment in the margin, which may explain a Hebrew unit of weight or measure, flag an ambiguity in the original text, present an alternative rendering of the original text, or propose an alternative reading for the original text. In the New Testament the dagger and parallel vertical bars are used rather interchangeably to indicate examples of ambiguity, literal translations of Hebrew idioms, or where the wording of the original text is in doubt.

The translators' position concerning notes was a reaction especially to the numerous interpretive, polemical, antimonarchical, and devotional notes that cluttered the margins of the Puritans' Geneva Bible. But more importantly, this policy concerning restricting the metatextual material in notes played a role in mediation between the viewpoints of the Anglicans and the Puritans. To illustrate the role of the presence or absence of notes in restricting or opening up the interpretation of the biblical text, we will examine representative examples of the interplay between translated text and metatextual note with respect to central issues in the debate between Anglicans and Puritans—the king and the monarchy, Calvinistic theology, and church polity involving especially bishops.[40]

6.1. The King and the Monarchy

A central debate between Anglicans and Puritans involved the king and the role of the monarchy. The Geneva Bible used extensive marginal notes to highlight the Puritan perspective concerning the king (see table 1 in the appendix). For example, in 1 Kgs 12:9 the translation of the KJV and the Geneva Bible are identical:[41]

KJV	Geneva	Geneva note
And hee said vnto them, What counsell giue ye, that we may answere this people, who haue spoken to mee, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put vpon vs, lighter?	And he said vnto them, [c]What counsel giue ye, that we may answer this people, which haue spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke, which thy father did put vpon vs lighter?	[c]There is no thing harder for them, that are in autoritie, then to bridel their affections and followe good counsel.

However, the Geneva Bible has a note that provides a critical assessment of the inability of "them, that are in authoritie" to "bridel their affections and followe good counsel." The KJV translators agreed with the

wording of the Geneva Bible, but avoided the note, thus silencing the Puritans' overt criticism of the monarchy.

The metatextual strategy of the KJV translators is similar in Prov 31:4:

KJV	Geneva	Geneva note
It *is* not for kings, O Lemuel, *it is* not for kings to drinke wine; nor for Princes, strong drinke:	It is not for Kings, o Lemuel, it is not for Kings to drinke wine, nor for princes [e]strong drinke,	[e]That is, the King must not giue him self to wantones & neglect his office, which is to execute iudgement.

The biblical text itself cautions kings concerning the use of alcohol, but the Geneva Bible adds a note to expand the principle to "wantones" and the neglect of his office, "which is to execute iudgement." In this way, the metatext of the Geneva Bible explicates an application of the verse to kings by broadening its interpretation. The KJV translators agreed with the wording of the Geneva Bible but shunned the note, thus silencing the criticism of the king as well as the expansion of the interpretation of the verse to general "wantonness" and injustice by the monarchy.[42]

In Exod 1:19 the metatextual note of the Geneva Bible is antimonarchical, but its relation to the translated verse is different:

KJV	Geneva	Geneva note
And the midwiues said vnto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women: for they are liuely, and are deliuered ere the midwiues come in vnto them.	And the midwiues answered Pharaoh, Because the Ebrewe [g]wome are not as the women of Egypt: for they are liuelie, and are deliuered yer ye midwife come at the.	[g]Their disobedience herein was lawful, but their dissembling euil.

The Geneva translators provide a note in order to guide the reader in the interpretation of the actions of the Israelite midwives. Their disobedience to the king was proper; only their dishonesty was evil. The KJV rendering of the verse is nearly identical to that of the Geneva Bible, but no such note is given. The absence of the metatext means that the interpretation of the midwives' actions is open and the reader must determine whether they behaved appropriately in disobeying the king. In this way, the KJV translators silenced the Puritan's approval of disobedience to the king.

Much less frequently, the KJV translators added a marginal note where none is found in the Geneva Bible, as in Eccl 4:13:

KJV	KJV note	Geneva
Better *is* a poore and a wise child, then an old and foolish king† who will no more be admonished.	†Heb. *who knoweth not to be admonished.*	Better is a poore and wise childe, then an olde and foolish King, which wil no more be admonished.

The KJV agreed with the rendering of the Geneva Bible, but added a note concerning another (more literal) rendering of the Hebrew source text. While the translated text could be understood as criticizing an obstinate king who refuses to be admonished, the alternative rending of the KJV note softens the verse by picturing a senile king who in his old age no longer has the good sense to be admonished. The alternate viewpoints of the KJV and the Geneva Bible with respect to the monarchy in this verse are further highlighted by their respective subject headings at the beginning of the chapter (Eccl 4), another type of metatext:

KJV subject headings for chapter	Geneva subject headings for chapter
1 Vanitie is encreased vnto men by oppression, 4 By enuie, 5 By idlenesse, 7 By couetousnesse, 9 By solitarinesse, 13 By wilfulnesse.	1 The innocents are oppressed. 4 Mens labours are ful of abuse and vanitie. 9 Mans societie is necessarie. 13 A yong man poore, and wise is to be preferred to an olde King that is a foole.

Whereas the KJV summarizes the contribution of verse 13 to the chapter as "willfulness," which is a means by which "vanitie is increased vnto men," the Geneva Bible summarizes verse 13 with an explicit mention that a poor, wise young man is "to be preferred to an olde King that is a foole."

Another general strategy of the Geneva notes is to explicate the referents of epithets and other descriptive expressions in the text. This also occurs with respect to verses involving the monarchy. In the lament of David for Saul and Jonathan in 2 Sam 1:19, we can see how this metatextual strategy furthers the Geneva translators' negative view of the monarchy:

KJV	Geneva	Geneva note
The beauty of Israel is slaine vpon thy high places: how are the mightie fallen!	O noble Israel,[h] he is slaine vpon thy hie places: how are the mighty ouerthrowen?	[h]Meaning Saúl.

The Geneva Bible narrows the interpretation of the lament to a king viewed elsewhere in the text as evil and illegitimate. The KJV has no such note, thus opening up the interpretation concerning whether the reference is to Saul alone, to Saul and Jonathan jointly, or to all of the slain Israelites. Furthermore, the KJV rendering of the Hebrew נָפְלוּ with the literal translation "fallen" provides a negative view of the demise of the monarch in contrast to the Geneva translation "overthrowen," which indicates the legitimate, forceful removal of an illegitimate ruler.[43]

The Geneva strategy of using notes to explicate referents in the text is similarly followed in Prov 31:1–2:

KJV	Geneva	Geneva note
The wordes of King Lemuel, the prophecie that his mother taught him.	THE WORDES OF KING [a]Lemuel: The [b]prophecie which his mother taught him.	[a]That is, of Solomon, who was called Lemuel, that is, of God because God had ordeined him to be King ouer Israel. [b]The doctrine, which his mother Bathsheba taught him.
What, my sonne! and what, the sonne of my wombe! and what, the sonne of my vowes!	What my sonne! and what the sonne of [c]my wombe! and what, o sonne of my desires!	[c]By this often repitition of one thing she declareth her motherlie affection,

The Geneva notes in Prov 31:1 identify Lemuel with Solomon and "his mother" with Bathsheba. In this way the interpretation of Prov 31:1–9 is narrowed to refer to the life and reign of Solomon, as recorded in the narratives of 1 Kings. Furthermore, the "prophecie" that his mother taught the king is characterized by the Geneva note as simply a "doctrine" as opposed to a prophetic message. In 31:2 the Geneva note serves to highlight their interpretation of the repetitive exclamations in the

verse as reflecting "motherlie affection." The note, then, furthers the Geneva translators' unusual rendering of Hebrew נְדָרַי as "my desires" as opposed to the direct rendering of the Hebrew as "my vows" in the KJV. By avoiding the metatextual note of the Geneva Bible, the KJV translators left open the identification of Lemuel (an otherwise unknown figure in the Bible) and Lemuel's mother. Furthermore, the KJV translators refrain from making explicit the nature of the "prophecy" of Lemuel's mother, instead leaving the interpretation open to the reader. Nor do the KJV translators explicate the pragmatic nuance of the repetitive expressions that begin the mother's exhortation to her sons. In every way, the KJV silences the metatextual explications and interpretations of the Geneva Bible as a means to allow a diversity of interpretations and characterizations.

The translation and interpretation of the Hebrew term מָשִׁיחַ ("anointed") also relates to the controversy concerning the monarchy, but with an additional theological twist—the term can also be interpreted christologically. The Geneva translators often explicate the referent of the anointed one by means of a note. In 1 Sam 12:5 the identity of "his Anointed" is explicated in a footnote along with a polemical statement that the king "is anointed by the commandment of the Lord" (that is, not solely on a hereditary basis):

KJV	Geneva	Geneva note
And hee said vnto them, The LORD *is* witnesse against you, and his Anointed is witnesse this day, that ye haue not found ought in my hand: And they answered, He is witnesse.	And he said vnto them, The Lord is witnes against you, and his [d]Anointed is witnes this day, that ye haue foude noght in mine hands. And they answered, He is witnes.	[d]Your King, who is anointed by the commandement of the Lord.

The KJV rendering of the verse is essentially identical to that in the Geneva Bible (KJV "you have not found ought" versus Geneva "ye haue foude noght"), but the note of Geneva is silenced. For additional examples in which the KJV refrains from explicating the identity of the anointed one even when it is not controversial or polemical, see 1 Sam 16:6 and Ps 105:15 in table 2 in the appendix; Luke 2:26 is similar.

In some verses, the Geneva note provides not just the explication of identity of the anointed one, but an interpretive explication. In Ps 89:51, for example, the Geneva footnote promotes a christological interpretation:

KJV	Geneva	Geneva note
Wherewith thine enemies haue reproached, O LORD: wherewith they haue reproached the foote-steppes of thine Annointed.	For thine enemies haue reproched *thee*, O Lord, because they haue reproched the [l]fotesteppes of thine Anointed.	[l]They laugh at vs, we pacietly waite for the coming of thy Christ.

In the original context of the psalm, the anointed one is the king. However, the metatext of the Geneva note guides the reader in a christological interpretation that the anointed one is Christ and the anointed one's footsteps are the coming of Christ. The metatext also guides the reader in appropriating the sentiments of the psalm for the reader's current situation by paraphrasing it: "they laugh at *us*, *we* patiently waite for the coming of thy Christ." The KJV translators keep the interpretation open, neither promoting nor foreclosing either a christological interpretation or an almost devotional appropriation of the sentiments to the reader's current situation. (See also Ps 84:9 in table 2.)

Occasionally, the KJV translators rendered the Hebrew term directly in contrast to the interpretive rendering in the Geneva, as in Ps 2:2:

KJV	Geneva	Geneva note
The Kings of the earth set themselues, and the rulers take counsell together, against the LORD, and against his Anoynted, saying,	The Kings of the earth band them selues, and the princes are assembled together against the Lord, and against his "Christ.	"Or, anointed.

The Geneva Bible translates "his Christ," thus promoting an explicitly christological interpretation of the verse, with the alternative literal translation in a note. In contrast, the KJV translators declined to interpret, translating directly "his Anoynted" and providing no note to an alternative, christological rendering of the Hebrew.

6.2. Bishops and Church Polity

A second area that fuelled Puritan-Anglican controversy involved the role of bishops and church polity.[44] The contrast in the interplay between text and metatextual notes in both KJV and Geneva is especially striking. One of the most instructive examples involves Ps 109:8 (top row) and its intertextual citation in Acts 1:20 (bottom row):

KJV	KJV note	Geneva	Geneva note
*Let his dayes be few: and let another take his ‖office.	*Act. 1.20 ‖Or, *charge*.	Let his daies be fewe, and let another take his [e]charge.	[e]Or, ministrie.
For it is written in the booke of Psalmes, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: *And his ‖Bishopricke let another take.	*Psal. 109.7 ‖Or, *office*; or, *charge*.	For it is written in the boke of Psalmes, Let his habitacion be voyde, and let no man dwell therein: also, Let another take his "charge.	"Or, ministerie.

In Ps 109:8 the Hebrew word פְּקֻדָּתוֹ was rendered in the KJV as "his office," with the alternative translation "his charge," the Geneva Bible's translation, in a note. In this way the KJV translators both acknowledged the difficulty in rendering the Hebrew term and allowed for both an Anglican interpretation ("office") and the Puritan one ("charge"). The Geneva Bible provides no alternative rendering and thus promotes only the Puritan interpretation. In Acts 1:20 the text of Ps 109:8 is cited and the Greek New Testament uses the term ἐπισκοπὴν. The KJV renders the term as "Bishoprick" with a metatextual note to suggest renderings promoting a Puritan point of view—"office" or "charge." By contrast, the Geneva Bible renders "charge" and provides only an explication based on their theological stance: "Or, ministrie." The KJV translators were clearly using the resources of metatextual notes to promote a balanced, evenhanded approach to the controversy regarding the ecclesiastical structures, in contrast to the Geneva Bible, which promoted a Puritan point of view

by going so far as to suppress the normal etymological connection of ἐπισκοπὴν to bishops.[45]

In Phil 1:1 the KJV and Geneva Bible agree completely on the translation of the Greek, but the Geneva Bible promotes a Puritan view of church structure in a note:

KJV	Geneva	Geneva note
Paul and Timotheus the seruants of Iesus Christ, to all the Saints in Christ Iesus which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons:	Paul & Timotheus the seruants of IESVS CHRIST, to all the Saintes in Christ Iesus which are at Philippi, with the [a]Bishops, and Deacons:	[a]By bishops here he meaneth them that had charge of the worde & gouerning, as pastours doctors, elders: by deacons, suche as had charge of the distribution, & of the poore and sicke.

The note in the Geneva Bible directs the reader's interpretation of bishop to specify not an individual ordained as bishop but rather "them that had charge of the worde & gouerning, as pastours, doctors, elders." Similarly, the Geneva translators wanted readers to interpret "deacons" as consisting of "suche as had charge of the distribution, & of the poore and sicke," rather than (as was the case in the Church of England) a deacon as an ordained position with liturgical functions. By avoiding the Geneva note, while simultaneously agreeing with Geneva's rendering of the verse, the KJV translators opened the interpretation of the verse. (See also 1 Tim 1:1 and table 3.)

As a contrastive example illustrating the general principle, consider 1 Pet 2:25:

KJV	Geneva
For yee were as sheepe going astray, but are now returned vnto the shepheard and Bishop of your soules.	For ye were as shepe going astraye: but are now returned vnto the shepherd and bishope of your soules.

The term ἐπίσκπον ("bishop") is used in 1 Pet 2:25 in a metaphoric sense to refer to Christ. This use of "bishop" does not figure in the controversy concerning church polity. As a result, not only are the translations of the Geneva and KJV identical, but the Geneva translators felt no need to provide an explanatory comment explicating the identity of the bishop.

6.3. Puritan Theology

The KJV policy of suppressing interpretive notes extended to instances in which the Geneva Bible used notes to promote Puritan theology.[46] In Isa 2:4, for example, the KJV provides a note that comments on the theologically neutral alternative rendering "scythes" for "pruning hooks":

KJV	KJV note	Geneva	Geneva notes
And hee shall iudge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beate their swords into plow-shares, and their speares into ‖pruning hookes: nation shall not lift vp sword against nation, neither shall they learne warre any more.	‖Or, *sythes*.	And [g]he shal iudge among the natios, & [h]rebuke manie people: thei shal [i]breake their swordes also into mattockes, & their speares into sithes: nacion shal not lift vp a sworde against nacion, nether shal they learne [k]to fight anie more.	[g]The Lord, who is Christ, shal haue all power giuen him. [h]That they may acknowledge their sinnes, & turne to him. [i]He sheweth the frute of the peace, which the Gospel shulde bring: to wit, that men shulde do good one to another, where as before they were enemies. [k]He speaketh not against the vse of weapons and lawful warre, but sheweth how the hearts of the godlie shalbe affected one toward another: which peace and loue doeth beginne and growe in this life, but shal be perfited, when we are ioyned with our head Christ Iesus.

The Geneva Bible, by contrast, provides four interpretive notes. The first promotes a christological interpretation with escatological overtones. The following three notes present a devotional theological viewpoint. In addition, the fourth note insures that the verse cannot be interpreted in a pacifistic way by providing it with an escatological interpretation. By eschewing all theological notes, the KJV translators prevent a Calvinist worldview and escatology from shaping the reading of the text.

In Eccl 3:1 the KJV and the Geneva Bible render the Hebrew differently:

KJV	Geneva	Geneva note
To euery thing *there is* a season, and a time to euery purpose vnder the heauen:	To all things *there is* an [a]appointed time, and a time to euerie purpose vnder the heauen.	[a]He speaketh of this diuersitie of time for two causes, first to declare ye there is nothing in this worlde perpetual: next to teache vs not to be grieued, if we haue not all things at once according to our desires, nether enjoye them so long as we wolde wish.

The KJV translates "a season" where the Geneva has the Calvinistic phrase "an appointed time." The Geneva Bible provides a note to further guide the reader's theological understanding of the verse. The KJV's metatextual silence leaves the intepretation of the verse—and its application to the reader—open.

The KJV is not burdened with marginal notes that are partial, untrue, seditious, or treacherous toward kingship, but rather by the technique of silence promotes the idea of divine rule by monarchs.

We have seen that the Geneva Bible's notes as metatexts served to regulate the reader's mental preparation to read the translated verses in accordance with the Puritan views concerning the king and the monarchy, ecclesiastical structure, and Calvinistic theology. The KJV translators judiciously used notes as metatexts in a highly restricted way. Often the notes provide alternative readings or renderings of the source text that may support an alternative theological possibility, but only rarely do the notes provide an overt theological or ideological interpretation. More frequently, the KJV translators silenced the ideological notes of the Geneva Bible, thus simultaneously opening up the translated verse to multiple interpretive possibilities while suppressing a distinctively Puritan ideological reading.

7. Conclusion

In this paper I have demonstrated the role of the metatexts in the King James Version as a means of mediating conflicting theological views. Translators often defend themselves and their translations by utilizing metatexts to frame the translations of sacred texts and to narrate the nature of the specific translation. Metatexts trace the contours of literary ideology and expose the sociocultural context that command literary exchanges and interventions.

By utilizing a technique of keeping silent about contemporary issues and instead focusing on the basic principles of translation, the metatexts of the KJV regulate the reader's mental preparation for a translation that diverges from the accepted sectarian interpretations in order to ensure that broader, nonsectarian interpretations will be considered orthodox. In this respect, the KJV adopted a stance toward both metatext and translation strategy that was diametrically opposed to that of the Geneva Bible, even though much of the specific wording of the KJV was drawn from or agrees with the Geneva Bible. Furthermore, to exude the appeal of the familiar, the visual presentation of the KJV was drawn from the history of Bible presentation, which culminated in the latest version of the Bishops' Bible (1568).

The dedication to King James prepares the reader mentally to accept the translation as the version to be used by all English-speaking subjects of King James, regardless of their religious party.

The second preface ("The Translators to the Reader") keeps silent about contemporary issues that divided the church. By focusing on the basic principles of translation, the potential and shortcomings of translations as well as the nature of translated texts, the reader is mentally prepared to consider the new translation, that is, the King James Version, as orthodox.

The Geneva Bible's notes as metatexts served to regulate the reader's mental preparation to read the translated verses in accordance with the Puritan views concerning the king and the monarchy, ecclesiastical structure, and Calvinistic theology. In their antinote policy the KJV translators judiciously used notes as metatexts in a highly restricted way. Many notes provide alternative readings or renderings of the source text that may support an alternative theological possibility, but only a few provide an overt theological or ideological interpretation. More frequently, the KJV translators silenced the ideological notes of the Geneva Bible, thus simultane-

ously opening up the translated verse to multiple interpretive possibilities while suppressing a distinctively Puritan ideological reading.

The metatexts of the KJV, far from being incidental to the ideology and goals of the king who commissioned its translation, are instead subtle but powerful means of mediation for advancing, achieving, and implementing goals of political unity and theological harmony.

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Notes

1. See John Milton and Paul Bandia, *Agents of Translation* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2009).

2. Mona Baker, *Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account* (London: Routledge, 2006).

3. Ibid.

4. See Charles W. Eliot, ed., *Prefaces and Prologues to Famous Books* (1910; Harvard Classics; repr., New York: Collier, 1969), 3–4; and Alasdair Gray, ed., *The Book of Prefaces* (2000; repr., London: Bloomsbury, 2002), 7–11.

5. For example, the Letter of Aristeas served as a metatext for the Septuagint (LXX) and St. Jerome's Letter to Pammachius served as a metatext for the Vulgate. See J. A. Naudé, "The Role of Metatexts in the Translations of Sacred Texts: The Case of the Book of Aristeas and the Septuagint," in *Septuagint and Reception: Essays Prepared for the Association for the Study of the Septuagint in South Africa* (ed. Johann Cook; Vetus Testamentum Supplement 127; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 281–97.

6. See also Gordon Campbell, *Bible: The Story of the King James Version 1611–2011* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 88, 302–8.

7. Although a twenty-first-century reader would naturally interpret the word *appointed* to refer to *authorized*, this is not the seventeenth-century reference of the English term. The words simply imply that the work was laid out in a way suitable for public reading in churches. See Alister McGrath, *In The Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 206.

8. The thirty-four pages of genealogies, the map of Canaan, and the list of place names printed on the reverse were added on account of an arrangement negotiated with James I by the noted entrepreneur John Speed in October 1610. On the basis of this "priviledge," every edition of the Bible printed for the next ten years had to include this material (see McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 211).

9. This section is substantially drawn from Jacobus A. Naudé and Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé, "Lamentations in the English Bible Translation Tradition of the King James Bible (1611)," *Scriptura* 110 (2012): 208–26, esp. 209–12

10. Willis Barnstone, *The Poetics of Translation: History, Theory, Practice* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 197–216.

11. S. L. Greenslade, "The English Versions of the Bible, 1525–1611," in *The West from the Reformation to the Present Day* (vol. 3 of *The Cambridge History of the Bible*; ed. S. L. Greenslade; 1963; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 141–68; see also A. Kenneth Curtis, "The Hampton Court Conference," in *Translation That Openeth the Window: Reflections on the History and Legacy of the King James Bible* (ed. David G. Burke; Society of Biblical Literature Biblical Scholarship in North America 23; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 57–71.

12. Barnstone, *Poetics of Translation*, 209; McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 98.

13. Barnstone, *Poetics of Translation*, 209–10.

14. McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 139.

15. Herbert describes the *editio princeps* of the KJV and provides a summary of its commissioning, translation process, and production with extant examples in various collections (A. S. Herbert, *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of the English Bible, 1525–1961* [London: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1968], 130–33, 136–39).

16. It strikingly recalls the circumstance and practice of the 72 interpreters of the Septuagint in their monastic quarters on Pharos. See Barnstone, *Poetics of Translation*, 214.

17. A typical page of the KJV was laid out as follows (see McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 200–212). The text is in two columns, each of which is enclosed within ruled margins, containing fifty-nine lines of text per column. Each verse begins on a new line, with its number clearly indicated at the beginning of the line, in the same size of type as the remainder of the verse itself. At the top, the title of the biblical book is displayed as a central header, with the subject matter of the pages being displayed on either side. No page numbers were provided.

18. Tyndale's NT has now been published as a facsimile; see *The New Testament: A Facsimile of the 1526 Edition Translated by William Tyndale* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2008).

19. David Norton, *The King James Bible: A Short History from Tyndale to Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 121–22.

20. See ibid., 117–27.

21. Burke, "Introduction," in Burke, *Translation That Openeth the Window*, xiii.

22. Olga S. Opfell, *The King James Bible Translators* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1982), 107.

23. The word *author* here implies authority, dominion, authentication (*Oxford English Dictionary*), that is, "he who authorizes or instigates"; see David Teems, *Majestie: The King behind the King James Bible* (Nashville: Nelson, 2010), 234. The style of the dedication seems overly flattering to a modern reader, but it reflects the way for seventeenth-century readers to address the sovereign upon whom their welfare, even their lives, might depend; see David Daniell, *The Bible in English* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 446.

24. McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 93–98.

25. Eliot, *Prefaces and Prologues*, 27–51.

26. Gray, *Book of Prefaces*, 189–90.

27. Donald L. Brake and Shelly Beach, *A Visual History of the King James Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 54; and Barnstone, *Poetics of Translation*, 208.

28. Though approved by the Convocation of Canterbury, the Bishops' Bible apparently did not receive Elizabeth's authorization.

29. Teems, *Majestie*, 232–35.

30. Nonetheless, it immediately replaced the Bishops' Bible as the standard in churches, and within forty years it supplanted the Geneva Bible as the most popular text for private use.

31. A facsimile, transcription, and modern translation of the preface is found in Erroll F. Rhodes and Liana Lupas, eds., *The Translators to the Reader: The Original Preface of the King James Version of 1611 Revisited* (New York: American Bible Society, 1997), 9–85. A transcription is provided in Daniell, *Bible in English*, 775–93. On the nature of the literary style in the preface, see David Norton, *A History of the English Bible as Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 63–70; and idem, *King James Bible*, 111–17.

32. Opfell, *King James Bible Translators*, 107–10.

33. Barnstone, *Poetics of Translation*, 216.

34. Rhodes and Lupas, *Translator to the Reader,* 1–8; Barclay M. Newman and Charles Houser, "Rediscovering the Preface and Notes to the Original King James Version," in Burke, *Translation That Openeth the Window,* 73–86; and Daniell, *Bible in English*, 446, 775–93.

35. In their preface, the Roman Catholic translators of the Douay-Rheims defend translating from the Vulgate rather than from the original languages by noting that the Vulgate was corrected by Jerome and commended by Augustine. Catholics of the Renaissance were unconvinced by "apostate" scholars who returned to the original texts, and they offered the traditional argument that only the Vulgate contained pure Scripture (Barnstone, *Poetics of Translation*, 210).

36. Barnstone, *Poetics of Translation*, 214; McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 189.

37. McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 99.

38. Archbishop Matthew Parker (1504–1575) disliked the Geneva Bible, not on account of the translation it offered, but because of the notes that accompanied it. Like Matthew's Bible before it, the Geneva Bible alienated the establishment because of its marginal notes (McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 124).

39. Norton, *King James Bible*, 114–17.

40. The data for this analysis are drawn from the facsimile editions: *The Holy Bible 1611 Edition King James Version* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2010); and *The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1560 Edition* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2007).

41. Despite King James's rule that the Bishops' Bible be the guiding English translation, several phrases appear to have been taken from the Geneva Bible for the King James translation. In some passages the KJV emends the Bishops' version in favor of the Geneva Bible.

42. For additional examples of similar metatextual strategies by the KJV and Geneva translators, see Prov 31:3 and table 1 in the appendix.

43. According to David Crystal, the KJV rendering in this verse is unique among the five major predecessor translations (*Begat: The King James Bible and the English Language* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010], 75–82, 263).

44. J. E. Wehrmeyer, "Where Have All the Bishops Gone?" in *The Bible and Its Translations: Colonial and Postcolonial Encounters with the Indigenous* (ed. J. A. Naudé; Acta Theologica Supplementum 12; Bloemfontein: SUN MeDIA, 2009), 106–29.

45. Tyndale insisted that the Greek word *presbyteros*, used in Paul's letters to refer to the priestly office within the Christian church, should be rendered instead as "senior." (In 1534, he altered this to "elder.") The English word *priest* was reserved to refer exclusively to refer to Jewish or pagan priests (McGrath, *In the Beginnning*, 75). The Greek term *ekklēsia*, "church," is translated as "congregation." As a result, a term that is endorsing the institution of the church was now to be understood as referring to local congregations of believers. However, the Geneva Bible chose to abandon the use of the term *congregation* and replace it with the more nuanced term *church*.

46. The Geneva Bible refers collectively to the letters of James, Peter, John, and Jude as "General Epistles," while previously they were referred to collectively as "Catholic Epistles."

Appendix: The Data concerning Text and Metatextual Notes

Table 1. Comparison of "Anointed" in KJV and Geneva

Reference	KJV	KJV note	Geneva	Geneva note
1 Sam 2:35	And I will raise me vp a faithfull Priest, *that* shall doe according to *that which is* in my heart and in my mind, and I will build him a sure house; and hee shall walke before mine **Anointed** for euer.	—	And I will sterre me vp a [z]faithful Priest, that shal do according to mine heart and according to my minde: and I wil buylde him a sure house, and he shal walke before mine **Anoynted** for euer.	[z]Meaning, Zadok, who succeded Abiathar, and was the figure of Christ.
1 Sam 12:5	And hee said vnto them, The Lord *is* witnesse against you, and his **Anointed** is witnesse this day, that ye haue not found ought in my hand: And they answered, He is witnesse.	—	And he said vnto them, The Lord is witnesse against you, and his [d]**Anointed** is witnes this day, that ye haue foude noght in mine hands. And they answered, He is witnes.	[d]Your King, who is anointed by the comandement of the Lord.
1 Sam 16:6	And it came to passe, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lords **anointed** is before him.	—	And when they were come, he loked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lords [d]**Anointed** is before him.	[d]Thinking, Eliab had bene appointed of God to be made King.

Ps 2:2	The Kings of the earth set themselues, and the rulers take counsell together, against the LORD, and against his **Anoynted**, *saying*,	—	The Kings of the earth band them selues, and the princes are assembled together against the Lord, and against his **Christ**.	Or, anointed.
Ps 84:9	Behold, O God our shield: and looke vpon the face of thine **anointed**.	—	Beholde, o God, our shield, & loke vpon the face of thine **Anointed**.	That is, for Christs sake, whose figure I represent.
Ps 89:51	Wherewith thine enemies haue reproached, O LORD: wherewith they haue reproached the footesteppes of thine **Annointed**.	—	For thine enemies haue reproched *thee*, o Lord, because they haue reproched the fotesteppes of thine **Anointed**.	They laugh at vs, we pacietly waite for the comming of thy Christ.
Ps 105:15	*Saying*, Touch not mine anointed; and doe my Prophets no harme.	—	Touche not mine [h]anointed, and do my [i]Prophetes no harme.	[h]Those whome I haue sanctified to be my people. [i]Meaning the olde fathers, to whome God sheweth himself plainely, and who were setters forthe of his worde.
Luke 2:26	And it was reuealed vnto him by the holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seene the Lords **Christ**.	—	And a reuelation was giuen him of the holie Gost, that he shulde not se death, before he had sene the Lords **Christ**.	Or, *Mesias*.

Table 2. Comparison of "Bishop" in KJV and Geneva

KJV	KJV note	Geneva	Geneva note
Acts 1:20			
For it is written in the booke of Psalmes, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: *And his ‖**Bishopricke** let another take.	*Psal. 109.7 ‖Or, *office*; or, *charge*.	For it is written in the boke of Psalmes, Let his habitacion be voyde, and let no man dwell therein: also, Let another take his *charge*.	Or, ministerie.
Ps 109:8			
*Let his dayes be few; *and* let another take his ‖**office**.	*Act. 1.20 ‖Or, *charge*.	Let his daies be fewe, and let another take his **charge**.	This was chiefly accomplished in Iudas, Act. 1.20.
Phil 1:1			
Paul and Timotheus, the seruants of Iesus Christ, to all the Saints in Christ Iesus, which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons:	—	Paul & Timotheus the seruants of IESVS CHRIST, to all the Saintes in Christ Iesus which are at Philippi, with the [a]Bishops, and Deacons:	[a]By bishops here he meaneth them that had charge of the worde & gouerning, as pastours doctors, elders: by deacons, suche as had charge of the distribution, & of the poore and sicke.

1 Tim 3:1

This is a true saying: If a man desire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a good worke.	—	This *is* a true saying, If any man desire the office of a [b]bishoppe, he desireth a worthie worke.	[b]Whether he be Pastor or Elder.

1 Pet 2:25

For yee were as sheepe going astray; but are now returned vnto the shepheard and Bishop of your soules.	—	For ye were as shepe going astraye: but are now returned vnto the shepherd and bishope of your soules.	

Table 3. Comparison of Texts Concerning the King in the KJV and Geneva Bible

KJV	KJV note	Geneva	Geneva note
Exod 1:19			
And the midwiues said vnto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women: for they *are* liuely, and are deliuered ere the midwiues come in vnto them.	—	And the midwiues answered Pharaoh, Because the Ebrewe [g]wome *are* not as the women of Egypt: for they are liuelie, and are deliuered yer ye midwife come at the.	[g]Their disobediece herein was lawful, but their dissembling euil.
2 Sam 1:19			
The beauty of Israel is slaine vpon thy high places: how are the mightie fallen!	—	O noble Israel, [h]he is slaine vpon thy hie places: how are the mighty ouerthrowen?	[h]Meaning Saúl.
1 Kgs 12:9			
And hee said vnto them, What counsell giue ye, that we may answere this people, who haue spoken to mee, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put vpon vs, lighter?	—	And he said vnto them, What counsel giue ye, that we may answer this people, which haue spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke, which thy father did put vpon vs lighter?	There is no thing harder for them, that are in autoritie, then to bridel their affections and followe good counsel.

Prov 31:1

The wordes of King Lemuel, the prophecie that his mother taught him.

—

THE WORDES OF KING [a]Lemuel: The [b]prophecie which his mother taught him.

[a]That is, of Salomon, who was called Lemuel, that is, of God because God had ordeined him to be King ouer Israel.

[b]The doctrine, which his mother Bathsheba taught him.

Prov 31:2

What, my sonne! and what, the sonne of my wombe! and what, the sonne of my vowes!

—

What my sonne! and what the sonne of [c]my wombe! and what, o sonne of my desires!

[c]By this often repitition of one thing she declareth her motherlie affection,

Prov 31:3

Giue not thy strength vnto women, nor thy wayes to that which destroyeth kings

—

Giue not thy strength vnto wome, [d]nor thy waies, *which is* to destroy Kings.

[d]Meaning, ye women are the destruction of Kings, if thei hante them.

Prov 31:4

It *is* not for kings, O Lemuel, *it is* not for kings to drinke wine; nor for Princes, strong drinke:

—

It is not for Kings, o Lemuel, it is not for Kings to drinke wine, nor for princes [e]strong drinke,

[e]That is, the King must not giue him self to wantones & neglect his office, which is to execute iudgement.

Eccl 4

	HEADING		HEADING
	1 Vanitie is encreased vnto men by oppression, 4 By enuie, 5 By idlenesse, 7 By couetousnesse, 9 By solitarinesse, 13 By wilfulnesse.		1 The innocents are oppressed. 4 Mens labours are ful of abuse and vanitie. 9 Mans societie is necessarie. 13 A yong man poore, and wise is to be preferred to an olde King that is a foole.
Eccl 4:13			
Better *is* a poore and a wise child, then an old and foolish king† who will no more be admonished.	†Heb. *who knoweth not to be admonished.*	Better is a poore and wise childe, then an olde and foolish King, which wil no more be admonished.	
Eccl 5:9 Moreouer the profit of the earth is for all: the king *himselfe* is serued by the field.	—	And the[g] abundance of the earth is ouer all: the King [h]*also consisteth* by the field that is tilled.	[g]The revenues of ye earth are to be preferred aboue all things, we apperteine to this life. [h]Kings and princes ca not mainteine their estate without tillage we this commendeth ye excellencie of tillage.

Table 4. Comparison of Texts Involving Possible Calvinist Interpretations

KJV	KJV note	Geneva	Geneva note
Eccl 3:1			
To euery *thing there is* a season, and a time to euerie purpose vnder the heauen.	—	To all things *there is* an [a]appointed time, and a time to euerie purpose vnder the heauen.	[a]He speaketh of this diuersitie of time for two causes, first to declare ye there is nothing in this worlde perpetual: next to teache vs not to be grieued, if we haue not all things at once according to our desires, nether enjoy them so long as we wolde wish.
Isa 2:4			
And hee shall iudge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beate their swords into plow-shares, and their speares into ||pruning hookes: nation shall not lift vp sword against nation,	||Or, *sythes*.	And [g]he shal iudge among the natios, & [h]rebuke manie people: thei shal [i]breake their swordes also into mattockes, & their speares into sithes: nacion shal not lift vp a sworde against nacion, nether shal they learne [k] to fight anie more.	[g]The Lord, who is Christ, shal haue all power giuen him. [h]That they may acknowledge their sinnes, & turne to him. [i]He sheweth the frute of the peace, which the Gospel shulde bringe: to wit, that men shulde

neither shall they learne warre any more.

do good one to another, where as before they were enemies.

[k]He speaketh not against the vse of weapons and lawful warre, but sheweth how the hearts of the godlie shalbe affected one toward another: which peace and loue doeth beginne and growe in this life, but shal be perfited, when we are ioyned with our head Christ Iesus.

TABLE 5. UNIQUE EXPRESSIONS IN KJV THAT AVOID EXPLICATIONS OF OTHER VERSIONS

KJV	KJV note	Geneva	Geneva note
Gen 4:16 קִדְמַת־עֵדֶן And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, **on the East of Eden**.	—	Then Kain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod **towarde the Eastside of Eden**.	—

Job 19:28
וְשֹׁרֶשׁ דָּבָר נִמְצָא־בִי

But ye should say, Why persecute we him? ||**seeing the root of the matter is found in me**.

|Or, *and what roote of matter is found in me?*

But ye said, Why is he persecuted? **And there was a [s]depe matter in me.**

[s]Thogh his friends thoght he was but persecuted of God for his sinnes, yet he declareth that: here was a deper consideration: to wit, the tryal of his faith & pacience, and so to be an example for others.

Acts 17:6
Οἱ *τὴν οἰκουμένην ἀναστατώσαντες*

And when they found them not, they drew Iason and certaine brethren vnto the rulers of the citie, crying, These that haue turned the world vpside downe are come hither also,

—

But when they founde them not, they drewe Iason & certeine brethren vnto the heades of the citie, crying, These are they which haue subuerted the state of the worlde, and here they are,

—

Priorities, Principles, and Prefaces: From the KJV to Today (1611–2011)

Richard A. Burridge

Introduction

Throughout the extraordinary year of celebration, 2011, there was much discussion and debate, even arguments, about the original purpose of the KJV—religious, political, or cultural?—and what the translators might have thought about it all in the light of this year of celebrations, not to mention the intervening four hundred years. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to explore the original principles and priorities of the translators of the King James Version as explicitly expressed in the prefaces to their translation. Having determined these principles and priorities from the original prefaces to the KJV, I then want to trace those principles and priorities through the prefaces of the rest of the King James family of translations (the RV, ASV, RSV, NRSV) to ascertain whether—and how—their translators followed those principles of the KJV. In each case, I will be taking the translators completely at their own words as expressed in their prefaces. From this comparison, we might be able to conclude something about what the original translators might have thought about their successors, and about this four hundredth year.

The annual biblical lecture in the University of London was given this year by Professor Larry Hurtado from Edinburgh on "The King James Bible and Biblical Scholarship."[1] Hurtado's lecture had three clear main points. First, he demonstrated that the KJV was a worthy product of the biblical scholarship of its own day. Second, he then traced how the success of the KJV (recognizing the initial lack of acceptance over the first fifty years or so) led to the development of a Bible-reading culture among the churches and in particular to the emergence of the discipline

of academic biblical scholarship itself in the next few centuries. Third, he looked at the effects of such biblical scholarship upon our estimation of the KJV, and particularly upon the *Textus Receptus* and other editions used by the KJV; thus Hurtado demonstrated the way in which nineteenth-century "biblical scholarship revealed in turn the shortcomings of the KJV and brought about its own supersession as an adequate translation of the Bible."[2] So these very neat three points—that the KJV is a product of biblical scholarship, and itself produces biblical scholarship which then leads biblical scholars to replace it—are expressed as an "interesting irony" that the KJV has brought about its own replacement. While I want to follow Hurtado's argument in many ways, I do want to disagree with his conclusion that this is an "interesting irony," as though somehow this is surprising or something that the translators of KJV would not have foreseen or wanted. Indeed, the converse is true, so in this paper I want to argue that this is an inevitable consequence of the original principles used by the KJV translators, and I will demonstrate this by looking at what they say in their prefaces about what they are doing and why.

1. The Principles in the Prefaces to the KJV

I have already referred to the fact that the KJV is a product of the biblical scholarship of its own day. Bede translated John's Gospel into Old English, but the first attempts after the Norman Conquest to translate the whole Bible into English come with the followers of John Wycliffe (1328–1384), which led to the publication, condemnation, and destruction of so-called Wycliffite Bibles from 1407 onward. However, it is through the Reformation period that translations of the Bible multiply through William Tyndale (New Testament in 1526), Miles Coverdale (1535), the Matthew Bible published by John Rogers as the first authorized English Bible in 1537, which is itself revised by Coverdale as the Great Bible (1538), and culminating in the Geneva Bible (1557–1560) and the Bishops' Bible (1568); in response, the Catholic English translation from the Vulgate, begun in Rheims and finished in Douay published the New Testament in 1583 and the Old Testament in 1609–1610.[3]

The key to understanding what these various scholars and translators thought they were doing is to be found in their prefaces. There are over twelve chapters of a General Prologue to some Wycliffite translations of the Bible.[4] Meanwhile, the prefaces from Tyndale, Coverdale, Cranmer

and the Great Bible, the Geneva Bible, the Bishops' Bible, the Rheims New Testament, and the Douay Old Testament have all been beautifully collected together and reproduced in *Translating the Bible: From William Tyndale to King James* by Gerald Bray,[5] which also includes two prefaces from the KJV.

Interestingly, it is not always realized that there are *two* prefaces to the KJV. In the United Kingdom, the better known is the dedicatory preface, which is addressed to King James himself:

> TO THE MOST
> HIGH AND MIGHTIE
> Prince, James by the grace of God
> King of Great Britaine, France and Ireland,
> Defender of the Faith, &c.
> THE TRANSLATORS OF *THE BIBLE,*
> *wish Grace, Mercie, and Peace, through* Jesus
> Christ *our* Lord.

It then continues with half a dozen paragraphs over a couple of pages, all addressed to the king himself, praising his accession after Elizabeth I and offering him the work of the translators. Since this preface is nearly always included in British editions of the KJV, I will begin each of my subsequent points with a quotation from this dedicatory preface.[6]

However, in addition, there is also the explanatory preface that is not always included; it is simply headed, "The Translators to the Reader."[7] This preface is much longer, often running to over twenty pages, and it is remarkable how few of the editions of the KJV include this translators' preface, certainly from the nineteenth century on. Nonetheless, this preface is really important. It was written by Miles Smith (1554–1624), who became bishop of Gloucester in 1612 after his labors on the KJV were finished. This essay contains fifteen subsections, each with a different heading, explaining what the translators have done. It is clear that Smith was expecting criticism, as he defends their methods and their approach to the translation against what he terms in the title to section 12, "the imputations of our adversaries."[8] Smith ends with a very moving exhortation addressed directly to the reader, to which we shall return shortly.[9] Thus, in addition to beginning each section with a quotation from the dedicatory preface, I will use various comments made in the preface from "The Translators to the Reader" to amplify the point being considered.

1.1. The Importance of the Bible as Scripture

The overarching principle that I want to identify is the importance of the Bible to the translators as Scripture. In the dedicatory preface, they refer to "the blessed continuance of the preaching of God's sacred word among us; which is that inestimable treasure, which excelleth all the riches of the earth."[10] Similarly, in "The Translators to the Reader," section 4 is entitled, "The praise of the holy scriptures": here the Scriptures are "acknowledged to be so full and so perfect" that "happy is the man that delighteth in the Scripture, and thrice happy that meditateth in it day and night."[11] Thus there is an important stress from the opening remarks of the dedicatory preface that Scripture is an "inestimable treasure" right through to the final paragraph of the "Translators to the Reader," which is an impassioned exhortation to the reader: "that we may understand his word, enabling our hearts, yea correcting our affections, … that we may love it to the end." Smith ends his concluding appeal, "a blessed thing it is … when God speaketh unto us, to hearken; when he setteth his word before us, to read it; when he stretcheth out his hand and calleth, to answer: 'Here am I, here we are to do thy will, O God.'"[12]

Thus it is very clear from both the dedicatory preface and from Smith's preface that this entire enterprise of translating the Bible into English is because they view it as Scripture, as sacred writings, containing the Word of God, which the readers need to know, understand, and act upon. This is also obvious from the methods employed by the translators. There are over fifty of them, organized into six companies in Oxford, Cambridge, and London, all under the direction of Richard Bancroft, archbishop of Canterbury.[13] They are bishops and scholars including the "King's Professors" (what we now know as the Regius Professors of Oxford and Cambridge), and only one of them, Sir Henry Savile, is not an ordained priest in the Church of England.[14] They are all experts in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and their libraries are predominantly in these languages. Thus David Norton has noted that William Branthwaite had a library (still preserved in Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, library) of some one thousand four hundred volumes with only one book in English, an obscure poem on the spider and the fly.[15] Meanwhile, John Bois's notes about his work with the Cambridge company contain "long disquisitions in Latin peppered with Greek words and phrases," suggesting that he is not necessarily even thinking in English, and causing Adam Nicolson to wonder, "was the conversation in the general meeting also in Latin, the lingua franca of

international scholarship, in which these men's lives had been steeped for decades?"[16] If some of the translators found it difficult to talk in English because they were thinking in Latin prose, this would explain why their style sometimes resembles classical style—namely, extended sentences as long as a paragraph with lots of subordinate clauses, participial phrases, and so forth. Significantly, even in its own day, the KJV was criticized as having an archaic or old-fashioned style.[17]

This point is very significant because, whatever else the translators think they are doing, they are not primarily concerned about creating a classic work of English literature. For them, the Bible is first and foremost the Word of God as Scripture. If Smith were to realize that their work would be championed today by leading atheists like Richard Dawkins, I suspect he would redouble his final plea to the reader: "Lastly, the admonition and menacing of Saint Augustine: 'They that despise God's will inviting them shall feel God's will taking vengeance of them.' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews 10.31)"![18]

This, therefore, is the overarching principle assumed by all the translators: that the Bible is Scripture, and from this assumption, three other principles follow.

1.2. Improving on Their Predecessors: "To Make a Good One Better"

I would like to begin consideration of each of these three following principles with the same quotation from the dedicatory preface, highlighting a different section each time to indicate which principle we are concentrating on:

> For when Your Highness had once out of deep judgment apprehended how convenient it was, that out of the Original Sacred Tongues, *together with comparing of the labours, both in our own, and other foreign languages, of many worthy men who went before us*, there should be one more exact translation of the Holy Scriptures into the English tongue.[19]

The second principle, which flows from the first (the conviction that the Bible is Scripture), is their desire to improve upon previous translations and the work of their predecessors. Thus here I want to highlight the phrase in the dedicatory preface, "comparing of the labours, both in our own, and other foreign languages, of many worthy men who went before us." There is a very strong sense that they are entering into the

labor of others both in English and in all the other languages in which they were skilled.

The same point is made even more clearly in "The Translators to the Reader," section 11:

> Yet for all that, as nothing is begun and perfected at the same time, and the later thoughts are thought to be the wiser; so, if we building upon their foundation that went before us, and being holpen by their labours, do endeavor to make that better which they left so good; no man, we are sure, hath cause to mislike us; they, we persuade ourselves, if they were alive, would thank us.[20]

The "no man, we are sure, hath cause to mislike us," when subjected to the hermeneutic of suspicion, makes clear they are actually quite sure that people will "mislike" them and criticize them for it, so this is their defense. Miles Smith is convinced—"we persuade ourselves"—that, if their predecessors were alive, they would thank the KJV translators for what they are doing. Of course, the implication follows that we might also say the same thing of the KJV translators, if they were alive today, thanking us for our work in continuing biblical scholarship and translation.

The attempt to anticipate being attacked for their work is made even more explicit a little bit later in the next section (12), entitled "An answer to the imputations of our adversaries":

> Yet before we end we must answer a third cavil and objection of theirs against us, for altering and amending our translation so oft; wherein truly they deal hardly, and strangely with us. For to whomever was it imputed for a fault (by such as were wise) to go over that which he had done, and to amend it where he saw cause?[21]

This is continued in section 13, as they turn from the negative task of answering objections to the more positive explanation of their own purpose:

> Truly (good Christian Reader) we never thought from the beginning, that we should need to make a new translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one, … but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against; that hath been our endeavour, that our mark.[22]

This contains the famous phrase, "to make a good one better," which will become a watchword for future translators, guiding the continuing work of biblical translation and scholarship, right up to today's computer Bible programs, illustrating this principle of constantly improving the art of translation.

Finally, in his rhetorical appeal to the reader, Smith beseeches us, "Others have laboured, and you may enter into their labours; O receive not so great things in vain! O despise not so great salvation!" (quoting Heb 2:3).[23] Thus he concludes with the idea that, as the translators have entered into the labors of those who went before them, so now the baton is being passed on to the reader, to enter into their labors, by receiving the KJV translation.

Furthermore, this principle of making "a good one better" is made explicit in Bancroft's fifteen "rules to be observed in the translation of the Bible" that he formulated for his translators working in six companies. The first rule makes clear how they were expected to go about their work: "The ordinary Bible read in the church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the truth of the original will permit."[24] In addition, rule 14 states, "These translations to be used when they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible: Tyndale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch's, Geneva" (Whitchurch refers to the Great Bible, as printed by Edward Whitchurch).[25]

Thus one translator would read out loud the verse under consideration from the Bishops' Bible, while everyone else listened to it, and compared it with the original Greek or Hebrew, and with the other permitted translations. The Bodleian Library in Oxford preserves a copy of the Bishops' Bible used by the translators with their annotations in the margins.[26] Meanwhile Lambeth Palace Library has an edition of Paul's Epistles, with columns ruled out to the right of each verse to provide space for the translators' notes. Nicolson observes, "Any tendency to believe that the creation of this Bible was an act of passionate inspiration; or that somehow in the age of Shakespeare and Donne, the making of this book was a wild eruption of untutored genius—that fantasy is dispelled within seconds of opening the manuscript. It is like an accountant's document, businesslike, its double-ruled columns more like a ledger than a work of literature."[27]

Nonetheless, this process produced something infinitely more readable and more memorable than any accountant, or, for that matter, any other church committee or General Synod working party, because of the

commitment to enter into and build upon the labors of their predecessors, which allowed so many of Tyndale's memorable phrases to be preserved in the KJV. Without doubt, the key element in this process was the act of it being read aloud and the others listening to it, as well as comparing it with the original languages and other translations. Christopher Southgate's poem especially commissioned for the London ISBL KJV 400th Anniversary Symposium compares it all to a poetry reading:

> Every section was read aloud, the company
> Some with eyes closed, some stroking pomaded beards,
> Listening like poets at a workshop
> For a false footfall, for any hint
> Of ugliness. Only the words that formed
> Like birds in the mouth, only they survived.[28]

Thus, because they were committed to the Bible as Scripture, the translators were determined to build upon their predecessors' translations, to include their words where possible, but always to improve them in order "to make a good one better."

1.3. Translation from the Original Languages: "Out of the Original Sacred Tongues"

> For when Your Highness had once out of deep judgment apprehended how convenient it was, that *out of the Original Sacred Tongues*, together with comparing of the labours, both in our own, and other foreign languages, of many worthy men who went before us, there should be one more exact translation of the Holy Scriptures into the English tongue.[29]

The next principle is translation from the original languages of Hebrew and Greek. If we return to the same key quotation from the dedicatory preface, this is made clear in the phrase: "out of the Original Sacred Tongues."[30]

Once again, this principle from the dedicatory preface is expanded in the preface from "The Translators to the Reader." Section 6 is headed, "the translation out of the Hebrew into Greek," talking about the production of the Septuagint by the Seventy, while section 7 goes on to "translation out of Hebrew into Latin," first considering the early Latin translations of the Old Testament before Jerome: "Again, they were not out of the Hebrew fountain (we speak of the Latin translations of the Old Testament) but out

of the Greek stream, therefore the Greek being not altogether clear, the Latin derived from it, must needs be muddy."[31]

Thus one of the problems of these Latin translations was that they were translated out of the Greek stream (i.e., from the Septuagint), rather than the Hebrew. Later, in section 13 explaining their own purposes, they do praise Jerome for the fact that he translated out of the Hebrew, not out of the Greek: "Saint Jerome maketh no mention of the Greek tongue, wherein yet he did excel, because he translated not the Old Testament out of Greek, but out of Hebrew." Thus in their work of translation, they have followed this clear principle:

> If you ask what they [i.e., the translators] had before them, truly it was the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the Greek of the New. These are the two golden pipes, or rather conduits, wherethrough the olive branches empty themselves into the gold. St. Augustine calleth them precedent, or original tongues; St. Jerome, fountains.[32]

So they are very insistent that, unlike the Catholic translations based on the Latin Vulgate, translation out of the original languages of Greek and Hebrew is a priority. This is made even clearer with regard to their use of marginal notes where the correct translation of the original languages was not clear. One of the reasons why King James disliked the Geneva Bible was its explanatory notes in the margins, some of which tended to be antimonarchical,[33] and therefore the KJV was to be without any kind of explanatory notes. However, an exception was made for where the meaning of a word in the original Hebrew or Greek is unclear, what section 14 of the preface calls the "diversity of senses in the margin":

> Now in such a case, doth not a margin do well to admonish the reader to seek further, and not to conclude or dogmatize upon this or that peremptorily? For as it is a fault of incredulity, to doubt of those things that are evident: so to determine of such things as the Spirit of God hath left (even in the judgment of the judicious) questionable, can be no less than presumption. Therefore as Saint Augustine saith, that variety of translations is profitable for the finding out of the sense of the Scriptures: so diversity of signification and sense in the margin, where the text is not so clear, must needs do good, yea, is necessary as we are persuaded.[34]

Thus the need to translate the original accurately is so important that an exception needed to be made to the rule banning notes by allowing notes

wherever there was a lack of clarity about the meaning of a word. They could thus show in the margin where a Hebrew or Greek word can be translated in a number of different ways, depending on the context. This is particularly important given the relatively small vocabulary of the Greek New Testament compared with the richness of English:

> we have not tied ourselves to an uniformity of phrasing, or to an identity of words, as some peradventure would wish that we had done. … For is the kingdom of God to become words or syllables? Why should we be in bondage to them if we may be free, use one precisely when we may use another no less fit, as commodiously? … so if we should say, as it were, unto certain words, Stand up higher, have a place in the Bible always, and to others of like quality, Get ye hence, be banished for ever.[35]

This concern for correct and accurate translation from the original languages of Hebrew and Greek is also abundantly evident in many of Bancroft's rules for the translators, thus:

> Rule 4. When a word hath divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most of the ancient fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place, and the analogy of the faith.

And:

> Rule 6. No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek Words which cannot, without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text.[36]

These two rules recognize that translation is never an exact science, and therefore while rule 4 suggests that ancient usage by the Fathers should be preferred, rule 6 nonetheless allows for marginal notes for alternative translations.

The procedure to be followed for understanding and translating the more difficult or obscure passages is even more extraordinary, as is made clear in the final few rules:

> Rule 11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority, to send to any learned man in the land for his judgement of such a place.

> Rule 12. Letters to be sent from every bishop to the rest of his clergy, admonishing them of this translation in hand; and to move and charge as many as being skilful in the tongues; and having taken pains in that kind, to send his particular observations to the company, either at Westminster, Cambridge, or Oxford.
>
> Rule 13. The directors in each company, to be the deans of Westminster and Chester for that place, and the King's professors in Hebrew or Greek in each University.
>
> Rule 15. Besides the said directors before mentioned, three or four of the most ancient and grave divines, in either of the universities, not employed in translating, to be assigned to the Vice-Chancellor, upon conference with the rest of the heads, to be overseers of the translations as well Hebrew as Greek, for the better observation of the 4th rule above specified.[37]

The consequence of these rules is that the entire workforce of the Church of England is mobilized for consultation, so that all its clergy right up to its top scholars and divines can be called upon to contribute their thoughts and observations as needed regarding difficult texts. This is an extraordinary mobilization to ensure that the translation from the original languages of Hebrew and Greek is as accurate as possible. There is a clear stress on the importance of scholarship, drawing upon a century of study in Oxford and Cambridge, as well as the excellent language skills of the translators themselves and, for that matter, any of the clergy "skilful in the tongues."

However, all this important stress on translation from the Greek and Hebrew was still dependent upon which Greek and Hebrew texts were available to the translators in the early seventeenth century, when textual criticism as we know it today had not really started, or at best was in its infancy. We have to wait over a century for J. J. Griesbach (1745–1812), who is normally seen as the founder of what will become modern textual criticism;[38] as Bruce Metzger puts it, Griesbach laid the "foundations for all subsequent work on the Greek text of the New Testament."[39] While the KJV translators were reliant on the Masoretic Text of the Old Testament, the Greek texts of the New Testament available to them were based on a few late medieval manuscripts. The editions of 1589 and 1598 by Theodore Beza were most often used, although other alternate readings were sometimes preferred, such as Erasmus's work and the 1550 Stephanus edition, which became known in later editions from 1633 as the *Textus Receptus*.

While Hurtado notes that, judged by their peers in their own time, "the KJV translators have to be given a basically favourable verdict," because "in 1611 the discipline of textual criticism had not yet been born,"[40] this reliance on late manuscripts means that all their heroic efforts to discover the best translation from the original sacred languages would be undermined by the discovery of more ancient manuscripts in the centuries ahead.

1.4 Translation into Understandable English: "Into the English Tongue"

> For when Your Highness had once out of deep judgment apprehended how convenient it was, that out of the Original Sacred Tongues, together with comparing of the labours, both in our own, and other foreign languages, of many worthy men who went before us, there should be *one more exact translation of the Holy Scriptures into the English tongue*.[41]

Finally, we return to our key quotation from the dedicatory preface for the fourth principle, namely translation into understandable English, as derived from the last clause, "one more exact translation of the Holy Scriptures into the English tongue." Once again, this principle is worked out more fully in Smith's preface, "The Translators to the Reader."

Section 5 of this preface is entitled, "Translation necessary," and it contains this wonderful quotation:

> But how shall men meditate in that, which they cannot understand? How shall they understand that, which is kept close in an unknown tongue? … Translation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernel; that putteth aside the curtain, that we may look into the most holy place; that removeth the cover of the well, that we may come by the water, even as Jacob rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well, by which means the flocks of Laban were watered [Gen 29:10]. Indeed without translation into the vulgar tongue, the unlearned are but like children at Jacob's well (which is deep) without a bucket, or something to draw with [John 4:11]: or as that person mentioned by Isaiah, to whom when a sealed book was delivered, with this motion, "Read this, I pray thee," he was fain to make this answer, "I cannot, for it is sealed" [Isa 29:11].[42]

This real plea to make translation necessary is then carried through the discussion of translation from the Hebrew and the Greek and the "imputations of our adversaries" until we come to section 11, "a satisfaction to our

brethren," where once again this desire for understandable English breaks out: "Now what can be more available thereto, than to deliver God's book unto God's people in a tongue which they understand? Since of a hidden treasure, and of a fountain that is sealed, there is no profit."[43]

It is no surprise that the same point recurs in Smith's concluding peroration to the reader: "but we desire that the scripture may speak like itself, as in the language of Canaan, that it may be understood even of the very vulgar."[44] In this respect, of course, they echo Erasmus's desire that "the farm worker might sing parts of them [the Gospels and Paul's Epistles] at the plough and the weaver might hum them at the shuttle," and Tyndale's hope that "if God spared him life, ere many years he would cause the boy that driveth the plough to know more of scripture than he did."[45]

Thus there is in both prefaces a clearly expressed aim for their translation to be understood by everyone in the vulgar tongue. However, the language of the translation was already somewhat archaic and formal, reflecting both the conservatism of the translators and their natural tendency to think and work in Latin and Greek. In addition, they were following the Bishops' Bible and the other translations permitted under rule 14, which would tend toward a more old-fashioned atmosphere. Campbell notes several examples: for instance, the distinction between "ye" and "you" for the nominative and accusative pronouns was already falling out of use at this period, but is retained by the KJV. Furthermore, while the use of "you" for the deferential address to one's social superior was distinguished from the more familiar "thee-thou," KJV continues to use "thee-thou" for God, reflecting both the singular of the original languages and also the intimacy of a loving relationship, especially with Jesus. One of the ironic paradoxes later is that one argument for "thee-thou" language being retained for God, especially over the last few decades, is that people thought it was disrespectful to call God "you," the exact opposite of the KJV translators' intentions!

Another significant point is that during the early part of the seventeenth century, the neuter possessive pronoun "its" was becoming universally accepted, but it is avoided in the KJV. While it sometimes has "of it" (e.g., Lev 25:5; Matt 2:16), more often the translators use the masculine form; for example, "if the salt has lost *his* savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" rather than "its savour" (Matt 5:13). Like the debate about deferential or familiar address to God, this preference of the KJV translators to make the text more masculine than usual English of that period will be important for future debates about gender and language.

Nonetheless, even allowing for the tendency toward the more formal or archaic language, the expressed intention of the translators in both prefaces to the KJV is clear and is entirely consistent with the other principles. Since they are committed to the Bible as Holy Scripture, they want to translate it *from* the original languages, using the best textual evidence and manuscripts available to them at that time, *into* a form of English that is understandable "even of the very vulgar"; and for this reason they enter into and build upon the labors of those who have worked on biblical translation before them "to make a good one better," to provide the best version of the Word of God for everyone to read. In this respect, the KJV translators are the culmination of over 150 years of hard work, scholarship, and debate that was so important that many people died for it during that time. Given these clear principles, it is reasonable to assume that the KJV translators would not have expected that this lengthy process of translation, from the work of their English predecessors through their own, would have ended with them. However, their translation soon became the misnamed "authorized version,"[46] dominating the English-speaking world for the best part of the next four centuries.

2. The Principles in Other Prefaces

By the second half of the nineteenth century, however, the shortcomings of the *Textus Receptus* upon which the KJV was based could be ignored no longer. On the Continent, Karl Lachmann produced an edition of the Greek New Testament with variant readings in 1831, while the discovery of Codex Sinaiticus by Constantin von Tischendorf (1815–1874) led to his various versions of the Greek New Testament, culminating in the eighth edition in 1869–1872. In Britain the work of Samuel Prideaux Tregelles (1813–1875) was followed by the major critical edition by B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort (1881), which set the tracks for all subsequent editions.[47]

Against this background, the decision in 1870 by the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury of the Church of England to produce a Revised Version (RV) of the KJV is not at all surprising. The preface to the Revised Version of the New Testament explains fully the decision to form two companies, one for the Old Testament and one for the New Testament:

> The present Revision had its origin in action taken by the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury in February 1870, and it has been conducted

> throughout on the plan laid down in the Rules drawn up by a special Committee of Convocation in the following May. Two Companies, the one for the revision of the Authorised Version of the Old Testament, and the other for the revision of the same Version of the New Testament, were formed in the manner specified in the Resolutions, and the work was commenced on the twenty-second day of June 1870.

The resolutions referred to above are as follows:

> 1. That it is desirable that a revision of the Authorised Version of the Holy Scriptures be undertaken.
>
> 2. That the revision be so conducted as to comprise both marginal renderings and such emendations as it may be found necessary to insert in the text of the Authorised Version.
>
> 3. That in the above resolutions we do not contemplate any new translation of the Bible, or any alteration of the language, except where in the judgement of the most competent scholars such change is necessary.
>
> 4. That in such necessary changes, the style of the language employed in the existing Version be closely followed.
>
> 5. That it is desirable that Convocation should nominate a body of its own members to undertake the work of revision, who shall be at liberty to invite the co-operation of any eminent for scholarship, to whatever nation or religious body they may belong.

Both companies were to work to the same principles and rules, quite deliberately following the procedures of the KJV, even down to meeting in the Jerusalem Chamber at Westminster Abbey, where one of the KJV companies had met, and following the same principles as in the KJV for careful assessment of the previous translation, and only changing it as a result of very clear majorities, based upon good scholarship from home and abroad:

> 1. To introduce as few alterations as possible into the Text of the Authorised Version consistently with faithfulness.
>
> 2. To limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the Authorised and earlier English Versions.

> 3. Each Company to go twice over the portion to be revised, once provisionally, the second time finally, and on principles of voting as hereinafter provided.
>
> 4. That the Text to be adopted be that for which the evidence is decidedly preponderating; and that when the Text so adopted differs from that from which the Authorised Version was made, the alteration be indicated in the margin.
>
> 5. To make or retain no change in the Text on the second final revision by each Company, except *two thirds* of those present approve of the same, but on the first revision to decide by simple majorities.
>
> 6. In every case of proposed alteration that may have given rise to discussion, to defer the voting thereupon till the next Meeting, whensoever the same shall be required by one third of those present at the Meeting, such intended vote to be announced in the notice for the next Meeting.
>
> 7. To revise the headings of chapters and pages, paragraphs, italics, and punctuation.
>
> 8. To refer, on the part of each Company, when considered desirable, to Divines, Scholars, and Literary Men, whether at home or abroad, for their opinions.

The result was the publication of the RV New Testament in 1881, with its preface dated in the Jerusalem Chamber, November 11, 1880.[48] The Old Testament, and therefore the complete Bible, followed four years later, with the additional preface for the Old Testament, dated in the Jerusalem Chamber, July 10, 1884.[49] Most editions of the RV contain the two prefaces of 1880 and 1884, and they can also be found on various websites.[50] In addition, the revisers brought out an edition of the Apocrypha in 1895.[51] However, it is fair to say that the RV was not an immediate success, and Westcott had to write a defense of it against its critics, in a way that is reminiscent of Miles Smith's attempt to deal with "imputations of our adversaries."[52]

The biggest problem was with regard to the revisions being suggested from across the Atlantic. The 1880 preface to the RV New Testament notes that:

> Shortly afterwards, steps were taken, under a resolution passed by both Houses of Convocation, for inviting the co-operation of American

> scholars; and eventually two Companies were formed in America, for the purpose of acting with the two English Companies, on the basis of the Principles and Rules drawn up by the Committee of Convocation.

However, it was made clear that such "co-operation of American scholars" was on the clear understanding that "respecting all points of ultimate difference, the English Companies, who had had the initiative in the work of revision, should have the decisive vote," as the preface to the subsequent American Standard Version later put it, although it was apparently intended that the American preferences should be published as an appendix. However, when this did not happen, and the English companies disbanded, the Americans continued their work:

> The American Revision Committee, after the publication of the Revised Version in 1885, resolved to continue their organization, and have regarded it as a possibility that an American recension of the English Revision might eventually be called for. Accordingly they have been engaged more or less diligently, ever since 1885, and especially in the last four years, in making ready for such a publication. The judgment of scholars, both in Great Britain and in the United States, has so far approved the American preferences that it now seems to be expedient to issue an edition of the Revised Version with those preferences embodied in the text.

This edition of the RV was published in 1901,[53] and it quickly became known as the American Standard Version (ASV), complete with its own preface (quoted above), following the manner of both the KJV and the RV prefaces.[54] The ASV preface goes on to explain the reasons for some of their particular choices, especially affecting the Old Testament—the chief of which was to replace the KJV and RV substitution of the divine name with "the LORD" with the name "Jehovah" on the "unanimous conviction that a Jewish superstition, which regarded the Divine Name as too sacred to be uttered, ought no longer to dominate in the English or any other version of the Old Testament." While most of their other decisions were to become the agreed standard, this use of "Jehovah" caused later difficulties, and was rescinded in later revisions.

With the exception of this last concern over the Divine Name, it became clear over the first half of the twentieth century that the balance of power had shifted toward America, not least through the copyright of the ASV, which "was acquired by the International Council of Religious Edu-

cation, and thus passed into the ownership of the churches of the United States and Canada which were associated in this Council through their boards of education and publication" (RSV preface).

In 1937 this council authorized another revision to "embody the best results of modern scholarship as to the meaning of the Scriptures, and express this meaning in English diction which is designed for use in public and private worship, and preserves those qualities which have given to the King James Version a supreme place in English literature" (quoted in RSV preface).

This work was once again undertaken by two sections, one on each Testament, and required two-thirds majorities of the committee for all changes—which included returning to the KJV practice of rendering the Divine Name (Tetragrammaton) with "the LORD." The resulting translation became known as the Revised Standard Version (RSV), with the publication of the New Testament in 1946,[55] and the Old Testament being completed in 1951, leading to the publication of the whole Bible in 1952.[56] While the title pages of the New Testament and the whole Bible include mention of the RV, the preface to the RSV states simply, "The Revised Standard Version of the Bible is an authorized revision of the American Standard Version, published in 1901, which was a revision of the King James Version, published in 1611,"[57] again reflecting its American origins. The translation of the Apocrypha appeared in 1957, while the New Testament was published in a second edition in 1971, leading to the ecumenical RSV Common Bible in 1973.[58] This Common Bible contains the usual RSV preface, as well as a special introductory preface about this ecumenical edition.[59]

The final step in this sequence of revisions comes with the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), first published in 1990.[60] Once again, there is a full preface, under the name of Bruce Metzger for the committee, echoing Miles Smith and the KJV in its title "To the Reader," which makes the pedigree of the NRSV crystal clear:

> The publication of our revision is yet another step in the long, continual process of making the Bible available in the form of the English language that is most widely current in our day. To summarize in a single sentence: the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible is an authorized revision of the Revised Standard Version, published in 1952, which was a revision of the American Standard Version, published in 1901, which, in turn, embodied earlier revisions of the King James Version, published in 1611.[61]

Lastly, given the shift of the balance of power across the Atlantic to the United States over the RV and ASV (note the omission of any mention of the RV in Metzger's explanation above), it is significant, if regrettable, that British readers had to wait another five years for an "Anglicized Edition," with its own extra preface explaining its various changes of spelling and usage from the American edition.[62]

Thus we can trace the very deliberate attempt in the prefaces of the RV, ASV, RSV, and NRSV to identify their translations with that of the KJV, in a sequence as it were of parent to child to grandchild to various great-grandchildren. Therefore it now remains to see if these various prefaces also reflect the same four key principles as set out in the KJV dedicatory preface and in Miles Smith's "The Translators to the Reader."

2.1. The Importance of the Bible as Scripture

First, we noted the importance of the Bible as Holy Scripture to the translators of the KJV, rather than it being seen as a literary work or masterpiece of English prose. Similarly, the 1880 RV preface to the New Testament refers to "the Sacred Text" and, like Miles Smith's peroration to the reader, it ends:

> We now conclude, humbly commending our labours to Almighty God, and praying that his favour and blessing may be vouchsafed to that which has been done in his name. We recognized from the first … that such a work can never be accomplished by organized efforts of scholarship and criticism, unless assisted by Divine help.[63]

Similarly, the 1884 RV preface to the Old Testament concludes, "now with a feeling of deep thankfulness to Almighty God, and the earnest hope that their endeavors may with His blessing tend to a clearer knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures, the Revisers bring their long task to a close."

Most of the ASV preface is taken up with explaining the particular points that its American translators have preferred to the RV, but it still concludes: "Earnestly hoping that our work may contribute to the better understanding of the Old Testament, we commend it to the considerate judgment of all students of the Sacred Scriptures."

However, there is a long statement in the RSV that makes clear that:

> The Bible is more than an historical document to be preserved. And it is more than a classic of English literature to be cherished and admired. It

> is a record of God's dealing with men, of God's revelation of Himself and His will. It records the life and work of Him in whom the Word of God became flesh and dwelt among men. The Bible carries its full message, not to those who regard it simply as the heritage of the past or praise its literary style, but to those who read it that they may discern and understand God's Word to men. That Word must not be disguised in phrases that are no longer clear, or hidden under words that have changed or lost their meaning. It must stand forth in language that is direct and plain and meaningful to people today. It is our hope and our earnest prayer that this Revised Standard Version of the Bible may be used by God to speak to men in these momentous times, and to help them to understand and believe and obey his Word.

Again, there is no suggestion that this revision is being done for literary purposes. This is expanded even more in the NRSV, which is also much more inclusive:

> In traditional Judaism and Christianity, the Bible has been more than a historical document to be preserved or a classic of literature to be cherished and admired; it is recognized as the unique record of God's dealings with people over all of the ages. The Old Testament sets forth the call of a special people to enter into covenant relation with the God of justice and steadfast love and to bring God's law to the nations. The New Testament records the life and work of Jesus Christ, the one in whom "the Word became flesh," as well as describes the rise and spread of the early Christian Church. The Bible carries its full message, not to those who regard it simply as a noble literary heritage of the past or who wish to use it to enhance political purposes and advance otherwise desirable goals, but to all persons and communities who read it so that they may discern and understand what God is saying to them.

The NRSV goes on to emphasize:

> That message must not be disguised in phrases that are no longer clear, or hidden under words that have changed or lost their meaning; it must be presented in language that is direct and plain and meaningful to people today. It is the hope and prayer of the translators that this version of the Bible may continue to hold a large place in congregational life and to speak to all readers, young and old alike, helping them to understand and believe and respond to its message.

Thus there is a clear agreement between all the versions about regarding the Bible as Holy Scripture. It might be expected that the RV and ASV, being revised and translated at the end of the nineteenth century, would share the KJV understanding of the Bible as sacred Scripture—but it is very significant that both the RSV and NRSV go out of their way, albeit in somewhat different words reflecting their different times, to stress that the Bible is not to be read as an historical document or classic of literature; rather it is the way God communicates with human beings, and only those seeking God will receive its "full message." From this key overarching principle about Scripture, the KJV translators derived their other concerns for improving on their predecessors by translating from original languages into understandable English.

2.2. "To Make a Good One Better"

The second principle of the KJV was to enter into the labors of those who had gone before them from Tyndale to the Geneva Bible in order "to make a good one better." It is abundantly clear that this aim is also shared for the RV, from the third Resolution of Convocation, quoted earlier:

> 3. That in the above resolutions we do not contemplate any new translation of the Bible, or any alteration of the language, except where in the judgement of the most competent scholars such change is necessary.

Furthermore, the first two rules stress that they are:

> 1. To introduce as few alterations as possible into the Text of the Authorised Version consistently with faithfulness.
>
> 2. To limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the Authorised and earlier English Versions.

This is further emphasized by the need for two-thirds majorities in order to be able to change anything. It is amazing that the revisers were able to do anything at all, but that they were able to undertake a revision on such terms demonstrates the high degree of agreement that the KJV was simply no longer appropriate or accurate on its own. Thus they conclude, "The character of the Revision was determined for us from the outset by the first

rule, 'to introduce as few alterations as possible, consistently with faithfulness.' Our task was revision, not re-translation."

Similarly, the American committees make absolutely clear that they have been working on an "American recension" to improve the RV. So again, there is the same idea of standing on the shoulders of those who have gone before:

> The American Revision Committee, after the publication of the Revised Version in 1885, resolved to continue their organization, and have regarded it as a possibility that an American recension of the English Revision might eventually be called for.

The RSV translators make this concern even more explicit, clarifying that the KJV itself is part of a "great tradition" going back to Tyndale, and quoting directly from Miles Smith's preface:

> The Revised Standard Version is not a new translation in the language of today. … It is a revision which seeks to preserve all that is best in the English Bible as it has been known and used through the years. It is intended for use in public and private worship, not merely for reading and instruction. We have resisted the temptation to use phrases that are merely current usage, and have sought to put the message of the Bible in simple, enduring words that are worthy to stand in the great Tyndale-King James tradition. We are glad to say, with the King James translators: "Truly (good Christian Reader) we never thought from the beginning, that we should need to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one … but to make a good one better.

In the decades after the RSV was published there was a veritable outpouring of "new translations in the language of today." Therefore, Metzger's preface to the NRSV draws attention to this proliferation of new translations in order to distinguish the NRSV from them:

> Because no translation of the Bible is perfect or is acceptable to all groups of readers, and because discoveries of older manuscripts and further investigation of linguistic features of the text continue to become available, renderings of the Bible have proliferated. During the years following the publication of the Revised Standard Version, twenty-six other English translations and revisions of the Bible were produced by committees and by individual scholars—not to mention twenty-five other translations and revisions of the New Testament alone.

The point being made here is that these are all new translations, such as the New English Bible (NEB), the New International Version (NIV), or the Jerusalem Bible (JB). In every case, they go back to the original Hebrew and Greek, and start all over again. They each have a deliberate intention to write out of a particular tradition (the NIV being more evangelical while the JB is Catholic) or for a defined vocabulary level or reading age (to make it more accessible or understandable, as in the Good News Bible). These are very important but completely different intentions from the one we get here with the sequence of RV-ASV-RSV-NRSV, which aims deliberately to stand in the tradition of the KJV and make it available to a new generation in the light of scholarly advances and manuscript discoveries. Thus the NRSV preface indicates that recent advances in Greek and Semitic language studies, and especially the discovery of the ancient Hebrew manuscripts from the Dead Sea area, have warranted a revision of the entire RSV, its predecessor.

> In order to take these discoveries into account, along with recent studies of documents in Semitic languages related to Hebrew, in 1974 the Policies Committee of the Revised Standard Version, which is a standing committee of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., authorized the preparation of a revision of the entire RSV Bible.

Their argument is simply that the NRSV is the latest version in the KJV tradition and the product of continuing revision. So in all these translations, their prefaces stress the principle of "to make a good one better," exactly the same as in the KJV.

2.3. Translation from the Original Languages

The next principle for the KJV translators was that their translation had to be from the original languages, Greek and Hebrew, rather than from the Latin. This entailed working from the best manuscripts available, even though the manuscripts that made up the *Textus Receptus* of the New Testament were mostly from only a century or two before. I noted at the start of our consideration of the various new revisions that the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed a great explosion of textual criticism, especially with regard to the New Testament. This is why the RV translators declare that "a revision of the Greek text was the necessary foundation of our work." Similarly, the entire raison d'être for the ASV was to incor-

porate the American committee's views and suggestions of how best to translate the older manuscripts that had been recently discovered.

Once again, this point is amplified in the preface to the RSV, which begins with a nice paragraph in praise of the KJV, quoting from the RV preface:

> The King James Version has with good reason been termed "the noblest monument of English prose." Its revisers in 1881 expressed admiration for "its simplicity, its dignity, its power, its happy turns of expression … the music of its cadences, and the felicities of its rhythm." It entered, as no other book has, into the making of the personal character and the public institutions of the English-speaking peoples. We owe to it an incalculable debt.

After such praise, you can almost hear the "But" coming, as they continue:

> By the middle of the nineteenth century, the development of Biblical studies and the discovery of many manuscripts more ancient than those upon which the King James Version was based, made it manifest that these defects are so many and so serious as to call for revision of the English translation. The task was undertaken, by authority of the Church of England, in 1870. The English Revised Version of the Bible was published in 1881–1885; and the American Standard Version, its variant embodying the preferences of the American scholars associated in the work, was published in 1901.

This is made even more pointed in the revised preface to the second edition of the RSV in 1971, when the sentence "Yet the King James Version has grave defects" is inserted at the start of this paragraph! This judgment is then retained in the NRSV preface, "To the Reader," which repeats this whole paragraph.

The translators of the RSV do point out, however, that this issue of the discovery of much older manuscripts applies much more to the New Testament than to the Old:

> The problem of establishing the correct Hebrew and Aramaic text of the Old Testament is very different from the corresponding problem in the New Testament. For the New Testament we have a large number of Greek manuscripts, preserving many variant forms of the text. Some of them were made only two or three centuries later than the original composition of the books. For the Old Testament, only late manuscripts survive,

> all (with the exception of the Dead Sea texts of Isaiah and Habakkuk and some fragments of other books) based on a standardized form of the text established many centuries after the books were written.

What is quite interesting in the NRSV preface is that it notes that a lot of the recent work that has been done on manuscripts since the publication of the RSV has been in the field of the Old Testament, particularly as a result of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other work on Semitic languages, as well as more dealing with more early manuscripts from the Greek books of the New Testament:

> Following the publication of the RSV Old Testament in 1952, significant advances were made in the discovery and interpretation of documents in Semitic languages related to Hebrew. In addition to the information that had become available in the late 1940s from the Dead Sea texts of Isaiah and Habakkuk, subsequent acquisitions from the same area brought to light many other early copies of all the books of the Hebrew Scriptures (except Esther), though most of these copies are fragmentary. During the same period early Greek manuscript copies of books of the New Testament also became available.

Therefore, we can trace a continuing commitment from the concerns of the KJV translators right through the RV and ASV to the RSV and NRSV to first establish the best possible text in the original Hebrew and Greek, and then to translate it as accurately as possible.

2.4. Translation into Understandable English

The fourth principle driving the KJV companies was the translation out of the original sacred tongues into understandable English. If we go back to the RV preface, it is clear that they are strongly constrained to keep to the language of the KJV in their revisions. The third section of the RV preface begins:

> We now come to the subject of Language. The second of the rules, by which the work has been governed, prescribed that the alterations to be introduced should be expressed, as far as possible, in the language of the Authorized Version or of the Versions that preceded it.

Therefore, by and large, they have adhered to the language and style of the KJV, except where meaning or sense requires a change:

> We have never removed any archaisms, whether in structure or in words, except where we were persuaded either that the meaning of the words was not generally understood, or that the nature of the expression led to some misconception of the true sense of the passage

However, the RV's concept of understandable English within the King James tradition does not go far enough for the ASV translators, who put it thus:

> We are not insensible to the justly lauded beauty and vigor of the style of the Authorized Version, nor do we forget that it has been no part of our task to modernize the diction of the Bible. But we are also aware that the rhetorical force and the antique flavor which we desire to retain do not consist in sporadic instances of uncouth, unidiomatic, or obscure phraseology. While we may freely admit that the English of the Scriptures can, as a whole, hardly be improved, yet it would be extravagant to hold that it cannot be bettered in any of its details.

This principle of translating into English that is well understood today, even while standing in the tradition of the KJV, is even more explicit with the RSV preface, which laments both the obsolete forms of the language and those words that have changed their meaning since the start of the seventeenth century:

> A major reason for revision of the King James Version, which is valid for both the Old Testament and the New Testament, is the change since 1611 in English usage. Many forms of expression have become archaic, while still generally intelligible—the use of thou, thee, thy, thine, and the verb endings -est and -edst, the verb endings -eth and -th, it came to pass that, whosoever, whatsoever, insomuch that, because that, for that, unto, howbeit, peradventure, holden, aforetime, must needs, would fain, behooved, to you-ward, etc. Other words are obsolete and no longer understood by the common reader. The greatest problem, however, is presented by the English words which are still in constant use but now convey a different meaning from that which they had in 1611 and in the King James Version. These words were once accurate translations of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures; but now, having changed in meaning, they have become misleading. They no longer say what the King James translators meant them to say.

Once again, the NRSV preface picks up the same point and amplifies it:

> As for the style of English adopted for the present revision, among the mandates given to the Committee in 1980 by the Division of Education and Ministry of the National Council of Churches of Christ (which now holds the copyright of the RSV Bible) was the directive to continue in the tradition of the King James Bible, but to introduce such changes as are warranted on the basis of accuracy, clarity, euphony, and current English usage. Within the constraints set by the original texts and by the mandates of the Division, the Committee has followed the maxim, "As literal as possible, as free as necessary." As a consequence, the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) remains essentially a literal translation. Paraphrastic renderings have been adopted only sparingly, and then chiefly to compensate for a deficiency in the English language—the lack of a common gender third person singular pronoun.

Bearing in mind our previous point that the KJV was archaically using "his" when contemporary English was already using "its," the decision to deal with the question of the gender in the third person is a matter of dealing with some of the consequences of the KJV's decision while standing within the clear tradition through all the revisions. Furthermore, since not only was the language of the KJV more masculine than the English of its time, it was also much more so than the original Greek (e.g., "if any man will follow" for the Greek "if anyone will follow" in Matt 16:24). Therefore the concern of the NRSV is more than just being "politically correct." What the NRSV is doing is reflecting the gender inclusiveness that is much more present in the original languages than it is in the KJV.

Significantly, the NRSV preface also points out that there is a contrast in style between the Old Testament and the New Testament:

> Another aspect of style will be detected by readers who compare the more stately English rendering of the Old Testament with the less formal rendering adopted for the New Testament. For example, the traditional distinction between *shall* and *will* in English has been retained in the Old Testament as appropriate in rendering a document that embodies what may be termed the classic form of Hebrew, while in the New Testament the abandonment of such distinctions in the usage of the future tense in English reflects the more colloquial nature of the koine Greek used by most New Testament authors except when they are quoting the Old Testament.

This is quite an important observation, recognizing that one consequence of the KJV was to make the Bible more "univocal," translating into

the same level and style of Jacobean prose all the varying styles and atmospheres contained within the variety of the biblical books, such as can be noted between the poor Greek of Mark's Gospel compared with Luke's ability to change his style from a Semitic feel in the opening chapters to better Greek as Paul gets to Athens or Rome. However, one could still be forgiven for not realizing that the language and style of the NRSV New Testament is generally meant to be "less formal" overall. This is because all of the revisions of the KJV through RV and ASV to RSV and NRSV are still trying to balance the desire to stay within the Tyndale-KJV tradition with all its great and memorable phrases while at the same time being true to their shared principle of translating the Bible as Scripture out of the original tongues into understandable English.

Conclusion

In conclusion, then, the KJV translators begin from a clear understanding that the Bible is Holy Scripture, "God's sacred word among us," and from that understanding, as the dedicatory preface articulates, three principles follow:

1. "To make a good one better"—standing in the tradition from Tyndale to the Bishops' Bible.
2. To do the translation "out of the original sacred tongues," which entailed using the best Hebrew and Greek manuscripts available at the time (the Masoretic Text for the Old Testament, the *Textus Receptus* for the New Testament, and other editions and manuscripts available).
3. To make "one more exact translation of the holy Scriptures into the English tongue," which means into understandable English so that even the vulgar could understand, if not necessarily quite Tyndale's plough boy.

Furthermore, this understanding of the Bible as Holy Scripture, and therefore sacred, is assumed throughout the longer preface, "The Translators to the Reader," where these same three principles are further explained with regard to the translators' method of working and translating, in defense against the accusations of their adversaries.

Subsequently, the translators who were engaged in the revisions of the KJV through the RV and the ASV to the RSV and the NRSV maintain

the tradition of providing explanatory prefaces in which they also clearly stress the importance of the Bible as Scripture. Even though they want to preserve all the language and melody and beauty of the KJV, for them the Bible is still first and foremost Scripture, not an interesting historical relic or a literary masterpiece. Additionally, they follow the KJV in wanting "to make a good one better" by constant improvement, while keeping what they can from the language and phrases of the KJV and its predecessors back to Tyndale. Such improvement of the KJV requires the use of all the best original sources, especially the earliest manuscripts found since the nineteenth century, and consulting all the work of textual critics thereon, to provide finally a translation into understandable English for today.

All of which makes us wonder what the translators of the KJV would have made of this quatercentenary year of celebration. Certainly they would not have been impressed with people like Richard Dawkins and the new atheists championing the KJV as a paragon of literature when the translators have made it absolutely clear that this is not what they think they are doing. I suspect frankly that they would have been appalled that we are still reading it at all; rather, they would have expected their work to have been improved upon and replaced long ago. Their own expressed principles, which are clearly there in their own prefaces, are the ones that have been followed faithfully by the RV, ASV, RSV, and NRSV.

So if we go back to Larry Hurtado's "interesting irony" that the KJV produces biblical scholarship that in turn brings about the demise of the KJV, I do not think that it is an irony at all. On the other hand, it is a direct consequence of that wonderful scholarship in the KJV that produced the widespread culture of Bible reading and biblical scholarship that has brought about the revisions as a way of being faithful to the original vision—constantly to find new and better ways to translate the Word of God out of the original sacred languages into the English language and the vulgar tongue.

Notes

1. L. W. Hurtado, "The King James Bible and Biblical Scholarship," *Expository Times* 122 (2011): 478–89.

2. Ibid., 489.

3. For a brief survey, see Gordon Campbell, *Bible: The Story of the King James Version, 1611–2011* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 7–31; and Gerald Bray, *Translating the Bible: From William Tyndale to King James* (London: Latimer Trust, 2010), 1–22.

4. For extracts, see Anne Hudson, *Selections from English Wycliffite Writings*

(1978; repr., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); also Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, Nicholas Watson, Andrew Taylor, and Ruth Evans, eds., *The Idea of the Vernacular: An Anthology of Middle English Literary Theory, 1280–1520* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 91–97, 146–56.

5. See n. 3 above.

6. For ease of reference, since there are so many different editions of this in different copies of the KJV, all references to the "dedicatory preface" will be to Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 201–3.

7. This is easily available on many websites today, but again here all references will be to Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 203–35.

8. Ibid., 222; the "adversaries" are also mentioned in the headings for the ninth and tenth sections (218–19).

9. Ibid., 234–35.

10. Ibid., 201.

11. Ibid., 208–11.

12. Ibid., 234–35.

13. See Campbell, *Bible,* 47–55. Adam Nicolson (*God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible* [New York: HarperCollins, 2003], 71) suggests numerological reasons for the six companies (the persons of the Trinity multiplied by the Testaments), and for the 48 translators (= 12 apostles x 4 evangelists).

14. For a full list and brief biographies, see Campbell, *Bible,* 276–94. Nicolson (*God's Secretaries,* 62–172) discusses many of them, with Savile considered on 163–72.

15. See also David Norton, *A Textual History of the King James Bible* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), and his essay in this volume (above, p. 4).

16. Nicolson, *God's Secretaries,* 208–10. Campbell (*Bible,* 68–69) includes a photograph of Bois's notes on Heb 10:12 in Latin interspersed with the Greek phrases.

17. Campbell, *Bible,* 73–79; Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 23–24.

18. Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 235.

19. Dedicatory preface, in Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 202 (emphasis added).

20. Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 221.

21. Ibid., 224–25.

22. Ibid., 228–29.

23. Section 15; Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 234.

24. Rule 1; see Campbell, *Bible,* 35; Nicolson, *God's Secretaries,* 73.

25. Rule 14; see Campbell, *Bible,* 39; Nicolson, *God's Secretaries,* 81.

26. Campbell contains photographs of the annotated pages of Luke 19 and Josh 19 (*Bible,* 58–59, figs. 11 and 12).

27. Nicolson, *God's Secretaries,* 73, 148–54; quotation from 149.

28. Christopher Southgate, "Rendering Voices: A Poem for the 400th Anniversary of the King James Bible," included in this volume (above, pp. 1–2).

29. Dedicatory preface, in Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 202 (emphasis added).

30. This phrase, "Out of the Original Sacred Tongues," was used as the title for the special KJV exhibition at Lambeth Palace Library through the summer of 2011.

31. Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 214.

32. Ibid., 229.

33. Campbell, *Bible,* 26–28; Nicolson, *God's Secretaries,* 73, 77, 249.

34. Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 232; the reference to Augustine is to *De doctrina Christiana* 2.1.

35. "Translators to the Reader," section 15; Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 232–33.

36. See Campbell, *Bible,* 36–37; Nicolson, *God's Secretaries,* 76–77.

37. See Campbell, *Bible,* 38–40; Nicolson, *God's Secretaries,* 81–83.

38. For more on the KJV and the development of text criticism, see David Trobisch's essay in this volume, 227–34.

39. Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration* (4th ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) , 165–67.

40. Hurtado, "King James Bible," 482, 486–87.

41. Dedicatory preface, in Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 202 (emphasis added).

42. Ibid., 211–12.

43. Ibid., 220.

44. Section 15; Bray, *Translating the Bible,* 234.

45. Erasmus's preface to his first edition of the Greek New Testament (1516); Tyndale's story is preserved in Foxe, *Book of Martyrs*, ch. 12.

46. The words "Authorized Version" do not appear on any KJV frontispiece (where it is only said to be "appointed" to be read in churches), and it seems to have received this common description only during the nineteenth century; the *Oxford English Dictionary* records the first usage in 1824. On the other hand, the description "the King James' Bible" is common from a century earlier, with "King James Version" occurring from 1814. As a matter of fact, the Church of England has a number of "authorized" versions for reading in church services.

47. See Hurtado, "King James Bible," 487–79, for a good summary of this period.

48. C. J. Ellicott et al., *The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Translated out of the Greek: Being the Version Set Forth A.D. 1611, Compared with the Most Ancient Authorities and Revised, A.D. 1881* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1881).

49. *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated out of the Original Tongues: Being the Version Set Forth A.D. 1611 Compared with the Most Ancient Authorities and Revised* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1885).

50. See, for example, http://www.bible-researcher.com/ervpreface.html.

51. *The Apocrypha: Translated out of the Greek and Latin Tongues: Being the Version Set Forth A.D. 1611 Compared with the Most Ancient Authorities and Revised A.D. 1894* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1895).

52. Brooke Foss Westcott, *Some Lessons of the Revised Version of the New Testament* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1898).

53. Philip Schaff, ed., *The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments, Translated out of the Original Tongues, Being the Version Set Forth A.D. 1611, Compared with the Most Ancient Authorities and Revised A.D. 1881–1885, Newly Edited by the American Revision Committee A.D. 1901, Standard Edition* (New York: Nelson, 1901).

54. Printed at the front of most editions of the ASV, but also available online, for example, at http://www.bible-researcher.com/asvpreface.html.

55. Luther Weigle, ed., *The New Covenant, Commonly Called the New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Revised Standard Version, Translated from the Greek, Being the Version Set Forth A.D. 1611, Revised A.D. 1881 and A.D. 1901, Compared with the Most Ancient Authorities and Revised A.D. 1946* (New York: Nelson, 1946).

56. *Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version. Containing the Old and New Testaments, Translated from the Original Tongues; Being the Version Set Forth A.D. 1611, Revised A.D. 1881–1885 and A.D. 1901; Compared with the Most Ancient Authorities and Revised A.D. 1952* (New York: Nelson, 1952).

57. The preface to the RSV is published at the front of most editions, and like the others, is also available online, e.g., http://www.bible-researcher.com/rsvpreface.html or http://www.ncccusa.org/newbtu/aboutrsv.html.

58. *The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version. Containing the Old and New Testaments with the Apocrypha/Deuteroncanonical Books: An Ecumenical Edition* (New York: Collins, 1973).

59. Published at the front of the Common Bible, or available online, e.g., at http://www.katapi.org.uk/RSV/RSVCommonBPreface.htm.

60. Bruce M. Metzger et al., *The New Revised Standard Version* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

61. Published at the front of all NRSVs, or online, e.g., http://www.ncccusa.org/newbtu/reader.html or http://bible.oremus.org/nrsvae/reader.html.

62. Published before the main preface "To the Reader" in anglicized editions, or online, e.g., http://bible.oremus.org/nrsvae/preface.html.

63. Since the page numbers of all the prefaces to the RV, ASV, RSV, and NRSV vary from edition to edition, and there is no single collection of them comparable with Bray's edition of the prefaces from Tyndale to KJV, we will not be able to provide precise references to all the quotations that follow; they can, however, be easily checked either against any printed version, or through the websites already listed.

The KJV and the Development of Text Criticism

David Trobisch

Several years ago I was invited to teach an evening class at a liberal arts college in the Midwest. The topic of the session was apocalyptic literature. We read from the book of Daniel using the New International Version. At one point a student asked, "Why are we not reading the Bible in its original language?" I was impressed by this question, especially since some chapters of Daniel are written in Hebrew, while other chapters are written in Aramaic. It took a while before I realized that the student referred to the King James Version.

In a nutshell, the student's comment describes the delicate relationship between modern text-critical studies and the KJV over the past four centuries. The version of the Bible that a faith community uses is the one they consider the Word of God. From a theological and experiential point of view, only the Scripture that believers hear and understand becomes the Word that God speaks. And because the young man had experienced the Bible in his church only in the KJV, he was right to declare that its wording was the original. No one had told him that the Protestant Bible was translated from Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

Strictly speaking, the KJV is not a translation; it is a revision of older translations. The first of the fifteen rules handed to the committee members read: "1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the truth of the original will permit."[1] This is in agreement with the information we have about the actual work of the translation subcommittees, the so-called companies.[2]

When Bible translations are revised, they are typically revised in observance of two criteria. First, whenever the modern usage of an expression has changed and rendered the old translation difficult to understand, the wording is adapted to current usage. Second, whenever the source

text changes because of newly discovered manuscripts or because of new methodological insights on how to evaluate the variants, these changes have to be reflected in the translation.[3] The "translators" of the KJV were asked to concentrate on the second task and to only make changes to the wording of the Bishops' Bible where it presented obvious discrepancies with the underlying Greek source text.

The Bishops' Bible was an authoritative edition, approved by the Church of England in 1568 and substantially revised in 1572. It was preceded by the translations of William Tyndale (New Testament, 1526), Miles Coverdale (1535), John Rogers's Matthew's Bible (1537), the Great Bible (1539), and William Wittingham's Geneva Bible (1560). All these older translations had also been consulted by the translators of the KJV.[4]

F. H. A. Scrivener compared the KJV of 1611 with the printed editions of the Greek text of the New Testament available at the time.[5] He consulted the editions of the Complutensian Polyglott (1520), Erasmus (1516, 1519, 1522, 1527, 1535), Aldus (1518), Colinaeus (1534), Stephanus (1546, 1549, 1550, 1551), and Beza (1560, 1565, 1582, 1589).[6] Scrivener documented 252 variants from the printed text of Beza alone.[7] Obviously, the translators of the KJV had created their own eclectic Greek text, a text that followed neither a specific manuscript nor a specific printed edition.[8]

The printed Greek editions used by the translators of the KJV were based on late Byzantine manuscripts. These manuscripts represented a controlled text authorized for use in the Greek Orthodox Church. The uniformity of these manuscripts created the impression of—as Elzevir in his 1633 edition stated—a "textum … ab omnibus receptum" (a text accepted by everybody), from which the short designation *Textus Receptus* evolved.[9]

However, that Byzantine editions are identified in the manuscript tradition by their exact wording is a common misunderstanding.[10] Examples of characteristics used by Hermann von Soden (1907) for distinguishing various Byzantine editions are the presence of editorial elements outside the Bible text, such as the form of Eusebius's letter concerning his canons, the titles and numbering of κεφάλαια, the numbering of sections and canons, and the notes marking the lectionary readings.[11] Von Soden's assessment—corroborated by a few proof texts—has been supported by Klaus Wachtel's seminal study of the General Letters in which he evaluated all documented variants.[12]

Another misconception would be to assume that the Textus Receptus is a simple representation of the text in Byzantine manuscripts, when in fact it diverts about eighteen hundred times.[13]

Scribal errors will always happen during the transmission process, and transcriptional mistakes may occur at any time, even during the printing process, without deriving from a specific text tradition.[14] Moreover, editors create new variants. For example, Erasmus put out five revised editions of his text, which were followed by Colinaeus's edition of 1534 that introduced readings from the Complutensian Polyglott and from new collations of manuscripts.[15]

It is therefore not possible to define the Textus Receptus by its exact wording. Rather, it is more helpful to define it by a selection of specific Byzantine readings shared by all printed editions. A short list of such variants include:

1. The doxology at the end of the Lord's Prayer in Matt 6:13 ("For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen").
2. The longer ending of Mark (i.e., Mark 16:9–20). Codex Sinaiticus and Vaticanus end with 16:8. Other manuscripts display a profusion of variants at this point.
3. The story of Jesus and the adulterous woman had been placed in John 7:53–8:11. It is missing in some manuscripts; others have it after John 7:36; 21:25; Luke 21:38; or 24:53.
4. A manuscript of the Byzantine tradition is most obviously recognized by the order of the writings. The Letters of Paul are inserted between Acts and the General Letters, and the Letter to the Hebrews is placed after Philemon. The Textus Receptus follows this order. All extant manuscripts older than the eighth century, however, have—with only few exceptions—Hebrews between 2 Thessalonians and 1 Timothy, and Acts preceding the General Letters.[16]

These variants are so pronounced that they can be identified even in a translation. The textual changes proposed by text critics could hardly be hidden from readers of the KJV.

It has been a long-standing objective of modern text criticism to reconstruct the oldest text of the New Testament, that is, a text older than the well-documented late Byzantine editions. As more and more manuscripts were collated, some readings of the Textus Receptus were abandoned. John Mill's edition of the Greek New Testament from 1707, Richard Bentley's

proposals of 1720, and Edward Wells's and Daniel Mace's editions of 1709–1719 and 1729 make substantial changes to the text.[17]

In 1734 Johann Albrecht Bengel produced a critical text from printed editions of the Greek New Testament.[18] He classified variants by sorting them into categories. Category α marked a definite original reading, and category β indicated a reading that he deemed better than the Textus Receptus, but not necessarily the original reading. Like Brian Walton and John Mill[19] before him, Bengel was criticized by those who would not accept that the Christian Bible was handed down with an abundance of variants. An anonymous critic wrote: "If every book-maker is to take into his head to treat the New Testament in this manner, we shall soon get a Greek text totally different from the received one. … The audacity is unprecedented."[20]

However, that the Greek New Testament was transmitted with a great number of variants was not Bengel's fault. Text critics do not cause variants, they try to resolve them.

The discovery and collation of new manuscripts together with an emancipation of biblical scholarship from the needs of the Christian faith community are manifest in the edition of Wettstein (1751–1752), who more than doubled the number of manuscripts consulted, and finally in the edition of Griesbach, who summarized the extraordinary critical effort of the eighteenth century in his editions of 1775–1777 and 1796–1806. The nineteenth century, finally, saw Lachmann's methodological program, which openly called for unsettling the Textus Receptus and for trying to reconstruct the text used by the church of the fourth century, a goal he thought achievable with the manuscript evidence at hand. But it was Tischendorf with his sensational discovery of the Codex Sinaiticus and his eight editions of the New Testament's text who fulfilled what Lachmann had called for.

Tischendorf's *Editio critica maior* (1869–1872) marks the last time that a printed edition documented all known Greek manuscripts.[21] In its apparatus, it collated and noted one papyrus, 64 majuscules, and a few unspecified minuscules.[22] Today, however, the electronic record kept by the *Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung* in Münster lists not one but 127 papyri, not 64 but 321 majuscules, 2,907 minuscule manuscripts, and 2,450 lectionaries, bringing the total number to 5,805 manuscripts.[23] The vast number of witnesses does result in a vast number of variants. There is quite possibly not one sentence in the New Testament that con-

tains the exact same wording in each of the existing manuscripts. A conservative estimate assumes somewhere between eighty thousand and one hundred thousand text variations.

After Tischendorf, text critics concentrated on the methodological question of how to distill relevant information from the available collations of variants. This is where the two Englishmen, Brooke Foss Westcott and John Anthony Hort, made their mark.[24] Instead of simply gathering data, they concentrated on the question of how to evaluate it. By calling the discipline's attention to two manuscripts, the Codex Vaticanus and the Codex Sinaiticus, as the most important witnesses of a so-called neutral text, the departure from Byzantine editions together with the Textus Receptus was finally based on firm methodological ground. The British and Foreign Bible Society continued to distribute the Textus Receptus until 1904, when it was finally discontinued.[25]

One more Herculean effort was made by Hermann von Soden that not only describes the manuscript evidence but also provides a theoretical model on how to evaluate it.[26] With its new system of naming and classifying witnesses, however, it created confusion and failed to persuade the guild.

Intriguingly, none of the scholarly editions brought about the eventual fall of the Textus Receptus. Instead, it was caused by a small hand edition, put out by a teacher for his high school students. In it, Eberhard Nestle compared the text of Tischendorf's edition with that of Westcott-Hort. Where these two editions disagreed with each other, he consulted a third edition.[27] Then he printed the majority opinion in the text and the dissenting vote in the apparatus. Nestle's edition was published 1898 by the Württembergische Bibelgesellschaft. The endorsement of a Bible Society eliminated consideration of the Textus Receptus in the church and in academia, from which it never recovered. The textual Greek basis, on which the KJV stood, was now abandoned. It is from the revised Nestle text that almost all Bible translations are made today.[28]

The Textus Receptus has left its mark on the Nestle edition in at least one aspect: As pointed out earlier, the oldest manuscripts present the writings of the New Testament in a different order than the Byzantine editions. Erasmus, however, followed his Byzantine manuscripts and created the order of the Textus Receptus, which is reflected in the KJV. Although the text-critical effort of the Nestle edition was to reconstruct the text of the second century, it arranged the writings in the order of medieval

Byzantine editions: Hebrews follows Philemon, the Letters of Paul follow Acts. Tischendorf, Westcott-Hort, and von Soden in their editions presented the books of the New Testament as they are arranged in virtually all pre-Byzantine manuscripts, such as in the codices Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, and Alexandrinus.

The Nestle edition dominates the market, and it is accepted by scholars and Bible translators as the general reference text. In practice, however, just like any eclectic text, the text of the Nestle edition is regularly revised. We have seen twenty-eight revisions in little more than a century, and the next edition is on its way.

With the acceptance of modern language translations in the practice of English-speaking churches, the KJV has lost the dominance it once had. However, Bible societies tend not to remove passages known to readers of the KJV that, from a scholarly point of view, were not part of the original text of the New Testament. Instead of following the critical decisions of the Nestle edition, Bible agencies place passages like the story of Jesus and the adulterous woman in brackets and add footnotes such as: "The most ancient authorities lack…" (NRSV at John 8:11). And because the verse numbers of the KJV are continued through the spurious additions, few readers will notice that the text is no longer part of the New Testament.

The largest contribution the KJV made to the development of New Testament text criticism was its claim on the cover sheet that it was "Newly Translated out of the Originall Greeke." This made it easier to communicate to the wider public the simple goal of the discipline of text criticism: to try to get closer to the first edition of the New Testament, the archetype from which all extant manuscripts derive. At the same time the statement endorses future editors to revise their translation if the "Originall Greeke" text changes; and just as the translators of the KJV revised the Bishops' Bible, it opens the door wide for modern translators to revise the KJV.

Notes

1. "Bancroft's Rules to Be Observed in the Translation of the Bible," in Olga S. Opfell, *The King James Bible Translators* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1982), 139–40; David Norton, *A Textual History of the King James Bible* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 7.

2. Norton, *Textual History,* 12.

3. See, for example, International Council of Religious Education and Luther Allan Weigle, *An Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament* (Chicago: International Council of Religious Education, 1946).

4. Alister E. McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 67–129. Cf. Bancroft's rule 14.

5. Frederick Henry Ambrose Scrivener, *The New Testament in the Original Greek according to the Text Followed in the Authorized Version, Together with the Variations Adopted in the Revised Version* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1881).

6. Ibid., 648. For a brief history of the oldest printed editions of the New Testament, see Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism* (trans. Erroll F. Rhodes; rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 3–11.

7. Scrivener, *New Testament in Original Greek*, 648–56.

8. See John R. Kohlenberger, "The Textual Sources of the King James Bible," in *Translation That Openeth the Window: Reflections on the History and Legacy of the King James Bible* (ed. David G. Burke; Society of Biblical Literature Biblical Scholarship in North America 23; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 51.

9. Quoted from Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 6.

10. Kohlenberger ("Textual Sources," 51–52) provides selected readings where KJV differs from the Textus Receptus.

11. Hermann von Soden, *Die Evangelien* (section A of part 2: *Die Textformen,* of vol. 1: *Untersuchungen,* of *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt hergestellt auf Grund ihrer Textgeschichte*; Berlin: Arthur Glaue, 1907), 719–20.

12. Klaus Wachtel, *Der byzantinische Text der katholischen Briefe: Eine Untersuchung zur Entstehung der Koine des Neuen Testaments* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1995).

13. James R. White, "A Critique of the King James Only Movement," in Burke, *Translation That Openeth the Window*, 211–12.

14. So-called transcriptional probability; cf. B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek* (2nd ed.; London: Macmillan, 1896), 22–30.

15. Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 6.

16. David Trobisch, *The First Edition of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 25. The doxology printed at the end of the Letter to the Romans (Rom 16:25–27) in the Textus Receptus is found after 14:23 in Byzantine editions.

17. Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 9.

18. Johann Albrecht Bengel, *Hē Kainē Diathēkē: Novum Testamentum Graecum* (Tübingen: Cottae, 1734).

19. Brian Walton, Wenceslaus Hollar, and Pierre Lombart, *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta Complectentia Textus Originales, Hebraicum, cum Pentateucho Samaritano, Chaldaicum, Graecum* (6 vols.; London: Roycroft, 1657); John Mill, *Novum Testamentum Graecum, cum Lectionibus Variantibus MSS* (Oxford: 1707). Walton and Mill registered over thirty thousand variants documented in some hundred manuscripts. See also Brian Walton, *In Biblia Polyglotta Prolegomena* (Leipzig: Weygandianis, 1777).

20. John Christian Frederic Burk, *A Memoir of the Life and Writings of John Albert Bengel, Prelate of Wurtemberg* (London: Gladding, 1842), 237.

21. Constantin Tischendorf, ed., *Novum Testamentum Graece: Ad Antiquissimos Testes Denuo Recensuit, Apparatum Criticum Omni Studio Perfectum Apposuit Commentationem Isagogicam Praetexuit Constantinus Tischendorf* (8th ed.; 3 vols. in 5; Leipzig: Giesecke & Devrient, 1869–1894). See esp. vol. 3 by Caspar René Gregory, *Prolegomena* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1894).

22. Tischendorf relied heavily on previous printed editions for the selection of minuscule readings. Two decades later Caspar René Gregory lists and describes 2,080 minuscules; he has personally seen about 200 more and estimates the number of extant minuscules exceeding 3,000. See *Prolegomena* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1894), 453: "Scilicet in hoc catalogo sunt codicum duo milia octingenti. Exstant autem plus quam tria milia, ducentos enim alios ipse vidi."

23. Online: http://intf.uni-muenster.de/vmr/NTVMR/ListeHandschriften.php.

24. Westcott and Hort, *New Testament in Original Greek*.

25. Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 19.

26. Von Soden, *Schriften des Neuen Testaments.*

27. At first Weymouth's 2nd ed. of 1892, and after 1901 Bernhard Weiss's edition; see Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 19.

28. Contemporary advocates for the Textus Receptus often argue from a faith-based position and are unimpressed by the scholarly debate. See White, "Critique." An expression of this approach is the edition put out by the Trinitarian Bible Society (White, "Critique," 212) that used the KJV to reconstruct the text of the Greek NT, treating the text-critical decisions made by the translators of the KJV as an act of divine inspiration.

The KJV Translation of the Old Testament: The Case of Job

David J. A. Clines

1. Phrases That Have Entered the English Language

Perhaps surprisingly,[1] the King James Version of Job has provided only two phrases that may safely be said to have "entered the English language":

> The root of the matter (19:28)
>
> Escaped by the skin of my teeth (19:20)

Perhaps unsurprisingly, in both cases, though the KJV's literal translation is unexceptionable, the original meaning has been misunderstood. "The root of the matter" is generally used today to mean the essential or inner part of something, the core,[2] but roots are more properly the origin of things than their essence. The friends whom Job imagines saying "the root of the matter is in him" are meaning that Job is the cause of his own suffering; it would make no sense to say that the essence of Job's suffering lies in himself.

As for the "skin of the teeth," we should take into view the whole sentence, since it is only in the light of its first half that the second can be understood at all:

> My bone cleaueth to my skinne, and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skinne of my teeth. (19:20)

That Job's bones should cleave to his flesh would seem quite satisfactory, anatomically. But "cleaving" (Heb. *dābaq*) is not used of two things sticking together, but of one thing sticking to or clinging to another: the weaker

to the stronger or the lesser to the greater, Ruth to Naomi (Ruth 1:14), a virulent skin disease to Gehazi (2 Kgs 5:27), the tongue to the roof of the mouth (Job 29:10). An interesting play on the sense of the verb is made at 2 Sam 23:10 where the warrior Eleazar keeps on smiting the Philistines "vntill his hand was wearie, and his hand claue vnto the sword"; usually it would be the sword that would "cleave" to one's hand, not the hand to the sword, but in the warrior's manic or supernaturally heightened state the hand becomes an appendage to the sword!

In a healthy body, the flesh and skin cling to, or hang on, the bones, the framework of the body. But Job's bones are so weakened, which is to say, he is so lacking in psychic energy, that they cannot support his flesh, but must themselves be supported by it. It is an image of the decay of vigor. Parallel to that is his sense that he is "escaped with the skin of his teeth," that is, he has survived but he has lost everything. He has no skin left on him apart from the skin of his teeth, which we know is no skin at all, for he has been flayed alive, punished by beating that has damaged and stripped off his skin.[3]

In modern English, to escape with the skin of one's teeth is to have a genuine, though narrow, escape. For Job, it is no escape at all, no more than a Pyrrhic victory is a victory. And by the way, it is "with" the skin of the teeth (as the KJV rightly has, following the Geneva Bible), not "by" the skin of the teeth (as RV, ASV, RSV, NRSV), which is unintelligible.[4] Still less is it:

> NAB I have escaped with my flesh between my teeth.
>
> JB my bones stick out like teeth (similarly, NJB).
>
> NEB, REB and I gnaw my under-lip with my teeth.[5]
>
> TEV My skin hangs loose on my bones; I have barely escaped with my life.

2. Phrases Familiar to a Literate Audience

Few though the phrases may be that have come into ordinary English usage from KJV Job, there are many phrases and sentences that are familiar to very many educated speakers of the language. One can easily think of examples:

Man that is borne of a woman, is of few dayes, and full of trouble. (14:1)

Yet man is borne vnto trouble, as the sparkes flie vpward. (5:7)

The price of wisedome is aboue rubies. (28:18)

Canst thou bind the sweete influences of Pleiades? (38:31)

Naked came I out of my mothers wombe, and naked shall I returne thither. (1:21)

Hast thou not powred me out as milke, and cruddled me like cheese? (10:10)

Curse God, and die. (2:9)

Skinne for skinne, yea all that a man hath, wil he giue for his life. (2:4)

Who can bring a cleane thing out of an vncleane? not one. (14:4)

A land of darknes, as darknes it selfe, and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkenes. (10:22)

There the wicked cease from troubling: and there the wearie be at rest. (3:17)

My dayes are swifter then a weauers shuttle. (7:6)

No doubt but ye are the people, and wisedome shall die with you. (12:2)

But aske now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the foules of the aire, and they shall tell thee. (12:7)

Though hee slay mee, yet will I trust in him. (13:15)

If a man die, shall he liue againe? (14:14)

3. Some Joban Texts

Now to the main point of this paper, which is to look at some well-known Joban passages in the KJV in the light of its predecessors and successors.

3.1. Man That Is Born of a Woman (14:1)

> KJV Man *that is* borne of a woman, *is* of few dayes, and full of trouble.

Here are the KJV's predecessors:[6]

> Wyclif (ca. 1395): A man is borun of a womman, and lyueth schort tyme, and is fillid with many wretchidnessis.
>
> Coverdale (1535): Man that is borne of a woman, hath but a shorte tyme to lyue, and is full of dyuerse miseries.
>
> Geneva (1560): Man that is borne of woman, is of short continuance, and full of trouble.
>
> Bishops' Bible (1568): Man that is borne of woman, hath but a short time to lyue, and is full of miserie.

KJV's "Man that is borne of a woman, is of few dayes, and full of trouble" is a triumph, pointed, gnomic, and in tune with the lapidary Hebrew, which it renders literally (except for *qĕṣar yāmîm,* which is "short of days"). "Fillid with many wretchidnessis," "of short continuance," and "full of dyuerse miseries" are all very fine in their way, but the simplicity of the KJV outdoes them all.

The punctuation is interesting and important. As is well known, Elizabethan punctuation marks were speed regulators, and represented the pauses a reader might make in the reading rather than reflecting our modern ideas of grammatical logic;[7] even today's readers are likely to make a short pause after "woman," even though we would not in a written text suffer a comma to intervene between a subject and its verb. But consider what happened when the ASV revision was published in 1901:

> Man, that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.

We are now in the world of modern punctuation; the insertion of a comma after "man" (not in the RV of 1885, of which the ASV was a revision) sadly changes the clause that follows from a defining to a descriptive clause.[8] In the KJV the defining clause makes the reader wonder, if only for an instant, "Are there any humans not born of a woman?" and as well, "Is being born of a *woman* the problem?" The ASV turns that reader-involving phrasing into a banal and otiose clause. It appears to be a pure coincidence that in

April 1611 a play was performed for the first time at the Globe Theatre, the plot of which hinged on the singular case of a man *not* born of woman (*Macbeth* 4.1.86; 5.7.3).[9]

Of course today we cannot allow the gender-exclusive word *man* to stand, but it is a real loss to forgo the assonance of "man" and "woman" (the Hebrew itself had no assonance, since the terms were *ʾādām* and *ʾiššâ*), and the resulting modern translations are uniformly clunky:

> NJB (1985) a human being, born of woman, whose life is short but full of trouble.
>
> REB (1989) Every being born of woman is short-lived and full of trouble.
>
> NIV (1984) Mortals, born of woman, are of few days and full of trouble.

3.2. My Redeemer Liveth (19:23–27)

> (1) *Oh that my wordes were now written, oh that they were printed in a booke!* (v. 23)

It may seem strange, when printing was little more than 150 years old, that the KJV translators should have imagined that Job could have had his words printed in a book! No other Bible version, before or after the KJV, has the phrase "printed in a booke." The KJV was struggling with the Hebrew, which has Job wishing his words could be "engraved" or "inscribed" (*ḥāqaq*) in a *sēper*, traditionally translated "book," but more properly "document" or "writing." But you do not "engrave" things in written documents, and the KJV rightly looked for a word that conveyed the sense of "pressing down and leaving a mark." The term was "print," which was used in Lev 19:28 ("Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you") and had been used in Job 13:27 ("thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet"). Shakespeare has horses "Printing their prowd Hoofes i' th' receiuing Earth" (*Henry V* [1623], prol. 27).[10] We compare from the KJV's past:

> Wyclif: Who yyueth to me, that my wordis be writun? Who yyueth to me, 24 that tho be writun in a book with an yrun poyntil, ethir with a plate of leed; ethir with a chisel be grauun in a flynt?
>
> Coverdale: O that my wordes were written, O that they were put in a boke: 24 wolde God they were graue wt an yron pene in leade or in stone.

> Geneva: Oh that my wordes were nowe written! oh that they were written euen in a booke, 24 And grauen with an yron pen in lead, or in stone for euer!
>
> Bishops' Bible: O that my wordes were now written, O that they were put in a booke, 24 And grauen with an iron penne in leade, or in stone, to continue.

Successor translations usually have "inscribe" for *ḥāqaq*, but that may be too physical a term for mere writing, and it may be that the word *sēper* actually means an inscription (NEB, REB) or monument (NJB)—which would make "engrave, inscribe" the mot juste.

> (2) KJV: *For I know that my Redeemer liueth, and that he shall stand at the latter day, vpon the earth: And though after my skin, wormes destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.* (vv. 25–26)

KJV's predecessors translated these verses thus

> Coverdale: 25 For I am sure, that my redemer lyueth, and that I shall ryse out of the earth in the latter daye: 26 that I shal be clothed againe with this skynne, and se God in my flesh.
>
> Geneva: 25 For I am sure, that my Redeemer liueth, and he shall stand the last on the earth. 26 And though after my skin wormes destroy this bodie, yet shall I see God in my flesh.
>
> Bishops' Bible: 25 For I am sure that my redeemer saueth, and he shall rayse vp at the latter day them that lye in the dust. 26 And though after my skinne the [wormes] destroy this body, yet shall I see God in my fleshe.
>
> NEB: 25 But in my heart I know that my vindicator lives and that he will rise last to speak in court; 26 I shall discern my witness standing at my side and see my defending counsel, even God himself.
>
> Clines: 25 But I know that my champion lives
> and that he will rise last to speak for me on earth,
> 26 even after my skin has thus been stripped from me.
> Yet, to behold Eloah while still in my flesh—that is my desire.

My redeemer liveth (v. 25). Wyclif has the Middle English "ayenbiere," that is, back-buyer, redeemer. Coverdale introduced "redeemer." The Bishops' Bible strangely has "my redeemer saueth," when the Hebrew is plainly *ḥāy* "lives."

He shall stand at the latter day, vpon the earth (v. 25). Wyclif had "Y schal rise fro the erthe" and Coverdale "I shall ryse out of the earth," following the Vulgate *de terra surrecturus sim*. The Bishops' Bible correctly understood that the Hebrew had God as the subject, but it wrongly wrote "he shall rayse vp at the latter day them that lye in the dust." The Hebrew is literally "last upon dust he shall rise," which is admittedly odd. Geneva had "he shall stand the last on the earth," which is surprisingly good, since the idea is that the last to speak is the victor in a legal contest (cf. NEB, REB "he will rise last to speak in court'). KJV's "at the latter day" is not quite right, since Hebrew *ʾaḥărôn* does not by itself mean "latter day."

After my skin, wormes destroy this body (v. 26). There are no "worms" in the Hebrew, which has, literally, "and after my skin [masc.] they have stripped off [or, flayed] this [fem.]," a text that is certainly corrupt. The Geneva Bible was the first to introduce the worms, with its "though after my skin wormes destroy this bodie"; the Bishops' Bible carefully put the worms in brackets: "though after my skinne the [wormes] destroy this body." Bringing in the worms is a very reasonable solution to the question of who does the stripping off, though as a matter of fact it is not worms but bacteria that eat cadavers. Handel's *Messiah* has ensured that the KJV's worms live on, though they appear in no subsequent translation.

3.3. Behemoth (40:15–24)

(1) KJV: *Hee moueth his taile like a Cedar: the sinewes of his stones are wrapt together*. (40:17)

Wyclif: He streyneth his tail as a cedre; the senewis of his stones of gendrure ben foldid togidere.

Coverdale: He spredeth out his tale like a Cedre tre, all his vaynes are stiff.

Geneva: When hee taketh pleasure, his taile is like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapt together.

Bishops' Bible: When he wyll, he spreadeth out his tayle lyke a Cedar tree, all his sinowes are stiffe.

Clines: It stiffens its tail like a cedar;
the sinews of its thighs are intertwined.

The Hebrew of this verse is very difficult. The first colon seems to say that Behemoth *ḥāpēṣ* his tail like a cedar, but what does *ḥāpēṣ* mean? It could be the usual *ḥāpēṣ*, I "desire," but that would mean taking the verb as a temporal clause, as the Bishops' Bible rendering "when he wyll," and Geneva's "when hee taketh pleasure" (it is sexual pleasure that is implied).[11] Wyclif's "streyneth" is apparently the now obsolete "strain," that is, "bind tightly, clasp, squeeze," which Wyclif used at Num 30:14, in both cases to translate the Vulgate *constringere,* "bind";[12] it is hard to see what binding its tail like a cedar could mean, but it is obviously parallel to folding together the sinews of its testicles ("stones of gendrure"). Contrary to the Vulgate, Coverdale[13] and the Bishops' Bible thought it meant "spread," apparently on the basis of the shape of a cedar tree, since there is no linguistic evidence for such a meaning (the Bishops' Bible apparently translated the word twice, once as "desire, take pleasure," once as "spread out").

The KJV "Hee moueth his taile like a Cedar" took a new tack, no doubt in dependence, as in many places, on the new Hebrew lexicon of Johannes Buxtorf published in 1607. Buxtorf (1564–1629),[14] the Basel Hebraist, was famous for his knowledge of Jewish lexicography and interpretation, and incorporated in his lexicon many opinions of Jewish scholars like Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and Gersonides (Ralbag). For this verb, Buxtorf cited the view of Ibn Ezra and Gersonides that it is like *ḥāpaz,* "move quickly," together with another view also attributed to Ibn Ezra that the verb forms a temporal clause, "when he wishes" (an interpretation we have seen in the Bishops' Bible and the Geneva Bible).

It is hard to see, nevertheless, what moving the tail like a cedar could mean; cedar trees are not notable for moving, one would have thought. Most modern translations and commentators think that the verb should mean "stiffen," but equally without any adequate linguistic justification. If the "tail" of Behemoth is its penis,[15] and its "stones" are its testicles, the line would make good sense. But the "stones" are more likely the "thighs" (*paḥad*),[16] and I think the sense is: "It stiffens its tail like a cedar; the sinews of its thighs are intertwined."

(2) KJV: *Behold, he drinketh vp a riuer, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw vp Iordan into his mouth*. (40:23)

Coverdale: Lo, without eny laboure might he drynke out the whole floude, and suppe off Iordane without eny trauayle.

Geneva: Behold, he spoyleth the riuer, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw vp Iorden into his mouth.

Bishops' Bible: Beholde, he drinketh vp whole ryuers and feareth not, he thinketh that he can drawe vp Iordane into his mouth

Clines: Even if the river is in spate, it is not disturbed;
it is tranquil even if the torrent surges at its mouth.

It is a picturesque scene. Wyclif,[17] Coverdale, and the Bishops' Bible, followed by the KJV, take the verb *ʿāšaq* to mean "drink," following Vulgate *absorbebit*, though the Hebrew cannot mean that. The usual meaning of Hebrew *ʿāšaq* is rather "oppress," which the Geneva Bible attempts to express with "spoyleth," that is, despoils. Today it is much more common to see "the river" as the subject, and to translate "if the river is turbulent" (so RSV, NRSV, NIV).[18]

The verse continues: *lōʾ yaḥpôz,* "he is not frightened," the verb meaning "be in trepidation, hurry," the same *ḥāpaz* that we encountered as a presumed by-form of *ḥāpēṣ* in verse 17 above. Wyclif followed the Vulgate *mirabitur* with "he schal [not] wondre," but the Bishops' Bible and Geneva, with "feareth [not]" and "hasteth [not]," identified the same verb *ḥāpaz* though they understood it in somewhat different senses.[19] Coverdale "without eny laboure" perhaps was following Luther's *achtet es nicht groß,* "thinks nothing of it."

3.4. Leviathan (41:1–34)

KJV: *When he rayseth vp himselfe, the mightie are afraid: by reason of breakings they purifie themselues. The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the speare, the dart, nor the habergeon*. (41:25–26 [MT 17–18])

Wyclif: Whanne he schal be takun awei, aungels schulen drede; and thei aferd schulen be purgid. 26 Whanne swerd takith hym, it may not stonde, nethir spere, nether haburioun.

> Coverdale: When he goeth: the mightiest off all are afrayed, and the wawes heuy. 26 Yff he drawe out the swearde, there maye nether speare ner brest plate abyde him.
>
> Geneva: The mightie are afrayd of his maiestie, and for feare they faint in themselues. 26 When the sword doeth touch him, he will not rise vp, nor for the speare, dart nor habergeon.
>
> Bishops' Bible: When he goeth the mightie are afraide, and feare troubleth them. 26 If any man drawe out a sword at him, it shall not hurt him: there may neither speare, laueling, nor brestplate abide him.

Now regarding Leviathan we find some puzzles in the KJV. My own translation, identifying Leviathan as the crocodile, has:

> 25 When it jumps, heroes are terrified;
> at its splashes they are beside themselves.
> 26 If a sword should strike it, it can have no effect;
> no more can spear or dart or javelin.[20]

I will not examine all the variations in KJV's predecessors. Wyclif's "aungels" deserves a word, nonetheless. The Hebrew has *ʾĕlîm,* "gods," so "angels" is a fair translation; interestingly, NRSV also has "the gods" (though RSV had "the mighty"), and NJPS has "divine beings," though the plural does not occur anywhere else in Job, and it is hard to see how gods would come to be spectators of crocodiles. Most other modern translations take the form as a variant spelling for *ʾēlîm,* "rams, chiefs," and so render "the mighty."

Leviathan is pictured raising itself up, which I understand of the crocodile's terrifying "jumps," when, thrusting its tail and paddling with the back feet, it projects itself into the air vertically until half or more of its body is out of the water.[21] If that is the picture, the "breakings" of KJV, which is a fair translation of the Hebrew *šeber,* "breaking," are the tremendous splashes as the five-meter (16 ft.) long beast, weighing as much as 730 kilograms (1,650 lbs.), falls back into the water.[22]

So what are the mighty doing in their fear by *purifying* themselves? The Hebrew *ḥāṭāʾ* is the ordinary word for "miss, sin," but it occurs some eight times in Numbers in the sense "purify oneself." That will not suit here, and the KJV is really unintelligible. The BDB lexicon suggests "miss oneself, lose oneself, fig. for be bewildered, beside oneself,"[23] which is not entirely convincing but acceptable *faute de mieux.*

"Lay at" is a now mostly obsolete term for "aim blows or an attack at,"[24] and "hold" is "prevail."[25] It is the second half of verse 26 that is most puzzling. Pretty plainly, we have a set of three weapons that are ineffective against Leviathan, parallel to the sword in the first colon. So what is the "habergeon" doing here? That is no weapon, but a "sleeveless coat or jacket of mail or scale armour" (*OED*). It appears also in KJV's 2 Chr 26:14, among military accoutrements "shields, and speares, and helmets, and habergions, and bowes, and slings to cast stones," where weapons and articles of defense are combined (similarly at Neh 4:16). The Hebrew here in Job is *širyâ*, a word that occurs only once, and which the KJV confused with the similar word *širyôn,* "habergeon, coat of mail, harness, breastplate," as the KJV translates it variously in its eight occurrences. In so doing they were only following their predecessors, who all have "breastplate" or "habergeon."[26] Subsequent translations uniformly have a weapon, whether pointed shaft (RV, ASV), javelin (RSV, NRSV, NAB, NIV, NEB, REB), or lance (NJPS, JB, NJB), except that the the marginal reading of the RV of 1885 retains the impossible "coat of mail."

3.5. Hairy Robbers (5:5)

> KJV: *Whose haruest the hungry eateth vp, and taketh it euen out of the thorns, and the robber swalloweth vp their substance.*
>
> Wyclif: and thei, that thirsten, schulen drynke hise richessis.
>
> Coverdale: the thurstie had droncke vp his riches.
>
> Geneva: and the thirstie shall drinke vp their substance.
>
> Bishops' Bible: and the thurstie drunke vp their labour.

The picture here is of the children of the foolish man. The KJV goes a quite different route from that of its predecesors: it is not the thirsty, but the robber, who consumes the possessions of the foolish man's children. No previous or subsequent version saw a robber here. Where did KJV get the robber from? It was following Buxtorf's translation of the Hebrew *ṣammîm* as *horridus*, "hairy," which he charmingly explains as "robber" (*praedo*), since, he says, robbers are accustomed to wear their hair long—an idea he says derived from R. Levi Gershom (Gersonides).[27] If I had not thought to look up Bux-

torf, I should never have known why the KJV translated the word "robber," and I have searched in vain in the commentaries for an explanation.[28]

3.6. The Divine Midwife (26:12–13)

> KJV: 12 *Hee diuideth the sea with his power, and by his vnderstanding he smiteth through the proud.* 13 *By his spirit he hath garnished the heauens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.*
>
> Vulgate: 13 *obstetricante manu eius eductus est coluber tortuosus* ["and by his midwife hand the twisting serpent was brought forth"].
>
> Wyclif: 12 In the strengthe of hym the sees weren gaderid togidere sudeynly, and his prudence smoot the proude. 13 His spiryt ournede heuenes, and the crokid serpent was led out bi his hond, ledynge out as a mydwijf ledith out a child.
>
> Coverdale: 12 He stilleth the see with his power, & thorow his wysdome hath he set forth ye worlde. 13 With his sprete hath he garnished the heaues, & with his hande hath he wounded the rebellious serpet.
>
> Geneva: 12 The sea is calme by his power, and by his vnderstanding he smiteth the pride thereof. 13 His Spirite hath garnished the heauens, & his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.
>
> Bishops' Bible: 12 He stilleth the sea with his power, and through his wysdome smyteth he the strength therof. 13 His spirite hath garnished the heauens, & his hand hath made the crooked serpent.

This is at creation. Wyclif evidently followed the Vulgate's *maria congregata sunt* "the seas were gathered together," which cannot be justified from the Hebrew, but perhaps was inspired by Gen 1:9.[29] The other predecessor versions to the KJV took the verb *rāgaʿ* to mean "make still,"[30] as several of our modern versions do (RSV, NRSV, NJPS). But we find the KJV once again reliant on Buxtorf, who offered for this verse *disrupit,* "broke apart, dashed in pieces";[31] hence KJV "smiteth." This would be a second verb *rāgaʿ,* which is accepted by some modern lexica[32] and is represented in modern translations like NAB "stirs up," NIV "churned up," NJB "whipped up," and REB "cleft." It is hard to understand what God might have had to gain by stirring up the sea at creation, but if he was smiting or cleaving in

two the primeval sea monster, as Marduk did to Tiamat, that would make perfect sense. So at this point the KJV offers an interpretation that is by no means superseded.

As for verse 13, it is not surprising, given the cosmic context, that everyone today wants to translate *rûḥô* as "his wind" or "his breath." More interesting is the term *šiprâ,* "garnished." Vulgate had *ornavit*, which Wyclif turned into "ournede," a verb *orn* not attested in *OED* later than the sixteenth century. KJV's other predecessors all have "garnished," a term that *OED* glosses as "To dress, clothe, esp. in an elegant fashion" (§3), or "To fit out with anything that adorns or beautifies; to decorate, ornament, or embellish" (§4). Quite how KJV imagined God's spirit garnishing the heavens I do not know (perhaps decorating them with the heavenly bodies?); the translation "garnished" survives, however, in RV and ASV. The Hebrew is a little odd, literally "by his wind the heavens (became) beauty, clearness," a noun instead of an adjective as we would expect. It would be wonderful if the idea of the heavens as a molten mirror (as in 37:18) lay in the background here, and "the movement of winds across the sky [were] represented as God's breathing on its surface in order to polish it."[33] It is more likely, however, that the primeval world is envisaged as obscured by dark clouds (as in 38:9), which God's wind swept away at creation, when the "crooked serpent" Leviathan (as in Isa 27:1), a symbol of chaos, was fatally wounded.

Coverdale, with his "wounded," which he probably got from Luther's *zerschmettert,* "shattered," unknowingly anticipated the standard view today that the Hebrew verb is *ḥālal* "bore, pierce" (as all our modern versions—RV, ASV, RSV, NRSV, NJPS, NAB, NIV—have; NJB "transfixed" and REB "slays" do not differ in their understanding). But KJV stuck with the older tradition, which derived the verb from the root *ḥûl,* "writhe in pain; bring forth a child." It saw a reference to childbirth, which goes back to the Vulgate, *obstetricante manu eius eductus est coluber tortuosus,* "and by his midwife hand the twisting serpent was brought forth."[34] Wyclif had struggled with *eductus*, no doubt aware that the common verb *educo,* "lead out," also had a specialized meaning "assist as a midwife at birth";[35] hence his overly elaborate "led out bi his hond, ledynge out as a mydwijf ledith out a child."[36] The Bishops' Bible's tame translation "made" and Geneva's "formed," followed by the KJV, dropped the image of the midwife and even that of birth (for how would God have given birth to the crooked serpent *with his hand*?). Evocative though that image is, the context calls for a more dramatic event in tune with the violent images of

the previous verse, where God stilled (or, divided) the sea and crushed Rahab, the sea monster.

4. Conclusion

My study of the KJV of the book of Job provokes some reflections in me:

1. I have found it very rewarding, and always fascinating, to compare the KJV with its predecessors and successors, but I do not know that many people have done it. There is lot more work to be done on this front.

2. The KJV is much more like a sixteenth-century Bible than a twentieth-century one, not surprisingly. Quite apart from its Elizabethan English (as with Shakespeare, a commentator should look up the *OED* for every word), the KJV does not share with modern translations a commitment to make sense of a verse within the context of its chapter; the KJV translators seem to have been content to attempt a sense for a verse in itself.

3. The KJV translators not infrequently seem out of their depth, for example:

> He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease. (14:2)

> And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witness against me: and my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to my face. (16:8)

In verses like these, one feels that the translators had simply given up hope of making sense, and have decided to translate their text word for word even though it had no discernible meaning.

4. The KJV was a truly Anglican enterprise, forming a via media between faithfulness to the tradition, as represented by the Vulgate and the earlier English versions, and openness to the new Hebrew learning strongly influenced by Jewish scholars.

5. To judge by the book of Job, the KJV was a fine version, often superior to its predecessors, but not infrequently equalled or excelled by modern versions.

Notes

1. David Crystal claims to have identified 257 such phrases in the entire Bible: *Begat: The King James Bible and the English Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 304–11.

2. "An essential part or element; core" (*Webster's II: New World Dictionary* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2005], 985b).

3. We might compare the tyrannical rulers of Mic 3:3 who like butchers "flay" (*pāšaṭ*) or "tear off" (*gāzal*) the skin from the bodies of the people (Wyclif has the phrase, "Thus, as god seiþ of tyrau*n*tis, þei taken here skyn fro þe bak, & eten & drynkyn men*nus* blood" ("Of Prelates," chap. 9, in *The English Works of Wyclif* [London: Trübner, 1880], 73). For further treatment of the Job passages discussed in this paper, see my commentary: *Job 1–20* (Word Biblical Commentary 17; Waco, Tex.: Word, 1989); *Job 21–37* (Word Biblical Commentary 18A; Nashville: Nelson, 2006); *Job 38–42* (Word Biblical Commentary 18B; Nashville: Nelson, 2011).

4. "By the skin of one's teeth" is the more popular form; Google has 1,390,000 hits for "by the skin of his teeth" as against 1,110,000 for "with"; and 127,000 hits for "by the skin of my teeth" as against 87,500 for "with."

5. This translation depends on the proposal of G. R. Driver, "Problems in the Hebrew Text of Job," in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East, Presented to Professor Harold Henry Rowley … in Celebration of His Sixty-fifth Birthday* (Vetus Testamentum Supplement 3; Leiden: Brill, 1955), 80–81, that *ʾôr* is not "skin" but a homonym (see David J. A. Clines, ed., *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* [8 vols.; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 1993–2011], 7:318b [hereafter *DCH*]), and that *mlṭ* is not "escape" but a by-form of *mrṭ*, "make smooth, rub" (see *DCH* 6:299b).

6. For texts of Wyclif, Coverdale, Geneva Bible, and Bishops' Bible, I have used www.studylight.org. For the text of the KJV in the original spelling, I used www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/1611-Bible/.

7. This is so whether or not it was the printer who was in most cases responsible for the punctuation of a text; see Edwin J. Howard, "The Printer and Elizabethan Punctuation," *Studies in Philology* 27 (1930): 220–29.

8. Cf., e.g., Albert Charles Hamilton, "Punctuation," *The Spenser Encyclopedia* (ed. A. C. Hamilton; London: Routledge, 1990), 570.

9. There is a solitary piece of evidence that the play was first performed at the Globe Theatre in April 1611: Simon Forman's manuscript *The Bocke of Plaies* (Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 208).

10. Cf. *OED*, s.v. "print, *v.*," §1.a, "to press (something hard) into or upon a softer substance or surface, so as to leave an indentation or imprint"; §2.a, "to impress or stamp (a form, figure, mark, etc.) in or on a soft substance; to set or trace (a mark, figure, etc.) on any surface, by carving, writing, etc." (it is hard to see the distinction). In the seventeenth century a pen can print, as in Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus* 4.1.74, "Heauen guide thy pen to print thy sorrowes plaine."

11. So also Samuel Terrien, *Job* (Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament 13; Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1963).

12. At Gen 31:40 he used it in the sense of "press hard upon, afflict"; the Vulgate does not use *constringere* here.

13. Luther, whose translation Coverdale used, had "stretches itself out" (*streckt sich*), but Coverdale did not take that suggestion up.

14. On Buxtorf, see Gareth Lloyd Jones, *The Discovery of Hebrew in Tudor England: A Third Language* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983); and Stephen

G. Burnett, *From Christian Hebraism to Jewish Studies: Johannes Buxtorf (1564–1629) and Hebrew Learning in the Seventeenth Century* (Studies in the History of Christian Thought 68; Leiden: Brill, 1996). Buxtorf's first Hebrew lexicon was entitled, *Epitome radicum hebraicarum, hoc est, omnium thematum, cum suis derivatis, quæ in sacris bibliis hebraicis extant, explicatio*, and published in Basel in 1600. An expanded version, now including the Aramaic words in the Bible, was published in 1607, again in Basel: *Epitome radicum hebraicarum et chaldaicarum complectens omnes voces, tam primas quàm derivatas, quæ in Sacris Bibliis … extant: interpretationis fide, exemplorum biblicorum copia … locupletata, etc*. A new edition in 1615 was published under the title *Lexicon hebraicum et chaldaicum: complectens omnes voces, tam primas quam derivatas, quae in sacris Bibliis, hebraea, et ex parte chaldaea lingua scriptis, extant … ; accessit Lexicon breve rabbinico-philosophicum …, cum indice locorum scripturae et vocum latino. Editio nona, de novo recognita, et innumeris in locis aucta et emendate*. I have referred in this paper to my copy of the 9th edition (Basel: Johannes Ludwig König and Johannes Brandmyllerius [Brandmüller], 1689). A few copies of the 1600 and 1607 editions appear in Copac, the combined catalogues of UK research libraries, but I do not know where any copies the KJV translators used may be found, if any still exist (there is not one earlier than 1646 in the Library of Westminster Abbey, so Dr. Tony Trowles kindly informs me, nor one earlier than 1621 in Lambeth Palace Library).

15. Such a sense is attested for Postbiblical Hebrew (Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* [London: Luzac, 1903], 406a).

16. See *DCH* 6:675b.

17. Wyclif's "soupe up" is the verb "sup" in the sense labeled 1.a by *OED*, "To take (liquid) into the mouth in small quantities (as opposed to a draught)." Wyclif used it at Isa 28:7, "thei weren sopun up of wyn, thei erriden in drunkenesse," and at 1 Cor 15:54, "Deth is sopun vp in victorie."

18. I prefer to translate "even if the river is in spate," following the proposal of G. R. Driver, who finds a new word *ʿāšaq* here ("Difficult Words in the Hebrew Prophets," in *Studies in Old Testament Prophecy Presented to Professor Theodore H. Robinson* [ed. H. H. Rowley; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1950], 60); also followed by NEB, REB; see my *Job 38–42*, 1145, 1155–56; and *DCH* 6:620b.

19. I cannot explain the translation of *gîaḥ* as "draw up" (KJV, following Bishops' Bible and Geneva). Vulgate had *influat,* "flows, rushes," and the Hebrew verb seems unexceptionable, though perhaps a little odd in this connection.

20. Cf. RSV: "When he raises himself up the mighty are afraid; at the crashing they are beside themselves. 26 Though the sword reaches him, it does not avail; nor the spear, the dart, or the javelin."

21. Video clip at www.junglewalk.com.

22. This is the Nile crocodile; see animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/reptiles/nile-crocodile/.

23. F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1906), 307b (hereafter BDB).

24. *OED*, s.v. "lay," *v.* I, §32.c, quoting this passage.

25. *OED*, s.v. "hold," *v*., §26 (intrans.), without any example closely analogous to the present passage.

26. So too Buxtorf, *Lexicon,* 847 (*lorica*, breastplate).

27. Ibid., 652. The Hebrew word occurs only here; most today emend it to *ṣĕmē'îm,* "thirsty," with an aleph as the middle letter (as in Ps 107:5), and the Vulgate's *sitientes* obviously did the same. Buxtorf's interpretation was very influential: Edward Leigh was still repeating it in his *Critica sacra* (3rd ed.; London: Underhill, 1650), 205; and Edmund Castell in his *Lexicon heptaglotton* (London: Roycroft, 1669), col. 3187. The Hebrew *ṣammîm* was connected by Buxtorf and others with *ṣimmâ*, a word that today is always glossed as "veil," but which was understood in the seventeenth century as "hair," especially the hair falling down in front of the face, as in Cant 4:1, 3; 6:7.

28. Not that older commentators did not remark on the KJV rendering; for example, Matthew Poole, *Genesis–Job* (vol. 1 of *A Commentary on the Holy Bible*; 3 vols.; repr., London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1962), 932b [original title of 1683 edition, *Annotations on the Holy Bible*], wrote: "*The robbers;* so called from their long hair, which such persons nourished, either because of their wild and savage kind of life, which made them neglect the trimming of their hair and body; or that they might look more terribly, and so affright all those who should endeavour to oppose them."

29. So E. Dhorme, *A Commentary on the Book of Job* (trans. Harold Knight; London: Nelson, 1967), 374.

30. I cannot tell where Coverdale got this rendering, being no Hebraist himself. It was not from Luther, who had the exact opposite: *wird das Meer plötzlich ungestüm,* "the sea suddenly became tempestuous."

31. Buxtorf, *Lexicon,* 715; Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1879), 585a s.v. *dirumpo.*

32. See BDB, "*rāga*ʿ" I, "disturb" (p. 920b); II, "be at rest" (p. 921a); *DCH* 7:416b. The Koehler-Baumgartner lexicon, however, knows only one verb *rg*ʿ (*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* [ed. Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm; trans. M. E. J. Richardson; 5 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1994–2000], 3:1188a).

33. T. H. Gaster, "Firmament," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (ed. George A. Buttrick; 4 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), 2:270a.

34. Where did the midwife deity come from? I presume that the Vulgate wondered how a "hand" comes to figure in a reference to birth, and deduced that it must be the hand of a midwife.

35. Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary*, 827b.

36. *OED* does not recognize this usage of "lead out"; it should be mentioned in s.v. "lead" *v.* I, §8.e, "In literalisms of translation; = L. ducere and its compounds," where other literalisms of Wyclif appear.

The KJV New Testament: What Worked for the Translators and What Did Not?

James D. G. Dunn

Part of the reason for taking on this subject, I guess, was the memory of teenage irritation, more than fifty years ago, when I found myself increasingly frustrated at the many occurrences of "thou," "thee," and "ye"; the suffixes "-eth" and "-est"; and "hath," "spake," "wist," "wax," and "brethren." It was all so old-fashioned, out of date, not language I would use in any other context than reading the Bible. So I suppose I wanted an opportunity to say how I came to find the KJV less and less satisfactory and satisfying as a translation. Not simply for me in my own use of the Bible, but particularly in conversations with others about the Bible and its relevance to the mid-twentieth century. To tell the truth, the KJV was becoming something of an embarrassment. And the replacement translations—the Revised Version, the Weymouth and Moffatt translations—had never really taken off.[1] The KJV, as the *Authorized* Version, still reigned supreme, its place and status unshaken.

The most successful of the challengers, the Revised Standard Version (RSV), which went on to be authorized for use by all major Christian churches, was only beginning to establish itself in the latter half of the 1950s. And even in 1967–1968, when assisting in a congregation in Glasgow, I was sternly rebuked by a senior minister when I used a sermon to explain why I thought the RSV was the translation best suited to contemporary use; it was far too "liberal" as a translation![2] As one might expect, the episode did nothing to decrease my dissatisfaction with the KJV. And this deeply rooted discontent with the KJV was recently revived when I had to review a volume listing parallels with Paul's Letters that uses the KJV as the English translation of choice, "because KJV is closest to the original Greek New Testament writings according to KJV

experts."[3] Had our knowledge of the Greek New Testament remained so static since 1611?

So I continued to operate with the title given to this lecture. Here, after all, was my opportunity to express my long-standing disquiet over the King James Version of the New Testament and at the authority it still seemed to exercise.

But then came 2011, and the flood of commemorative pieces on the KJV in the popular press, television, and the Internet, and a whole sequence of lectures and special celebratory events in towns and cities over the land. The fact is that the KJV has a unique place within the culture and literary history of the English-speaking world. As Robert McCrum points out in an article in *The Observer*:

> As well as selling an estimated 1bn copies since 1611, the *KJB* went straight into our literary bloodstream like a lifesaving drug. Whenever we put words into someone's mouth, or see the writing on the wall, or go from strength to strength, or eat, drink and be merry, or fight the good fight, or bemoan the signs of the times, or find a fly in the ointment, or use words such as "long-suffering", "scapegoat" and "peacemaker" we are unconsciously quoting the *KJB*. More astounding, compared to Shakespeare's prodigal 31,000-word vocabulary, the *KJB* works its magic with a lexicon of just 12,000 words.

McCrum goes on to note how "the *KJB* became, in Adam Nicolson's resonant phrase, 'a kind of national shrine, built only of words.'"[4] Others have described it as "the noblest monument of English prose,"[5] or "the sublime summit of literature in English."[6] At the beginning of March 2011 the KJB was read from cover to cover in a 120-hour public readathon involving well-known public figures at the Bath Literary Festival. And the KJV 400 Survey on the most favorite version of the Bible came out with the astonishing result: KJV 56.3 percent; the nearest challenger, NIV 9.2 percent.

How then could I fail to give the KJV the praise that it so fully deserves? After all, it was the principal Bible of the English-speaking world, and the only Bible for English-speaking Protestants for more than 250 years. As has been endlessly repeated in articles and broadcasts over the past half-year, it has shaped the English language for centuries and in almost incalculable ways. *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* has twenty pages of quotations from the New Testament alone—another twenty pages

from the Old Testament and Apocrypha, though more than seventy from Shakespeare![7] So "What worked for the translators?" is a legitimate and important question, since what the translators produced certainly worked for generations of worshipers and KJV readers.

What Worked for the Translators?

The first and most obvious thing to say is that the KJV is the crème de la crème of the Renaissance for the English-speaking world. The Renaissance is rightly celebrated for its rediscovery of the classical world and its affirmation that present-day use of ancient classics and classical models should depend on original sources. The Reformation simply applied that primary principle, with its insistence that the Bible should be translated into the vernacular from the original Hebrew and Greek. The KJV was not the first translation into English. But Wycliffe's translation in the late fourteenth century was based on the Vulgate.[8] And what became the principal Catholic translation into English, the Douay-Rheims Bible (the NT was completed in Rheims in 1582, a good two centuries after Wycliffe's; the OT, in Douay in 1610), was also a translation from the Vulgate, aimed at countering what were seen as the "false translations" of the Protestants.[9] The eighteenth-century revision, known as the Challoner Bible, still worked primarily from the Vulgate, declared by the Council of Trent to be the "authentic" voice of the Bible; and still in the twentieth century, Ronald Knox's translation was made from the Vulgate.

Of course, the KJV was not the first English version of the Bible to be drawn from original sources. Crucial was the publication of Erasmus's Greek New Testament in 1516 (2nd ed. 1519, 3rd ed. 1522), which was an immediate and huge success. Along with Erasmus, special credit should be given to William Tyndale, who translated his New Testament from Erasmus's second and third editions in 1526 (revised in 1534). Tyndale's translation of the New Testament was the basis for Coverdale's New Testament. Matthew's Bible reprints Tyndale's 1534 New Testament, and was the basis of the Great Bible.[10] More than eighty percent of the language of the most popular Geneva Bible was drawn from Tyndale. Of the much less popular Bishops' Bible, published in 1568 under royal warrant and on the authority of Archbishop Matthew Parker, and intended for church rather than private use, David Daniell tartly comments: "Where it reprints Geneva it is acceptable, but much of the original work is incompetent, both in its scholarship and its verbosity."[11] And although the translators of

the KJV were instructed to take the 1602 edition of the Bishops' Bible as their basis, it is widely recognized that the KJV drew heavily on Tyndale,[12] though tending to latinize his translation (with some influence from the Douay-Rheims version),[13] presumably to counter the overly popular style of Tyndale and Geneva.

It is true that the Geneva Bible retained its popularity through the seventeenth century, but with the restoration of the monarchy, after the English Civil War and Commonwealth, it was the KJV which became established as the most reliable English translation and which for the following generations was the "authorized version" (AV).

What worked for the KJV translators were several crucial factors. One was the selection of translators, including 47 or 50 scholars (the exact number is uncertain), all members of the Church of England but representing a good cross-section of the broad church that was then the Church of England. There was partisanship in the translation, as we shall see, but with so much derived from Tyndale, the KJV could be regarded genuinely as a Bible for all the people and for almost the full range of Christian, certainly Protestant, opinion. It was the most ecumenical of translations and therefore rightly came to be regarded as the people's Bible.

What worked too was the modus operandi—scholars working in six panels or "companies," each responsible for a different part of the Bible, two of them working on the New Testament. For panels to have to agree on the translation meant that the idiosyncrasies of the individual translators, even Tyndale, were avoided. As David Crystal notes: "Translations by any one member of the group were to be approved by the other members, and each company was to send its material to the others for final agreement. Disagreements were to be formally discussed, and external opinions sought if required. Never had there been such a translation by committee."[14]

Not least of what worked for the KJV translators was the effectiveness of their translation in sticking so closely to the Greek—not a literal translation as such, but one that retained the Greek word order and syntax and yet avoided for the most part the clunkiness of a too literal translation. Such closeness between the Greek word order and the English word order was a boon to many generations of students learning New Testament Greek. The integrity of the translators is well illustrated by their practice of putting in italics words that were implied by the Greek but not actually used in the Greek text. The KJV provided a model translation that its suc-

cessors regularly failed to match. So it was not simply the almost hallowed status of the KJV, the AV, that caused the translators of the RV and RSV to insist that theirs were to be regarded not as entirely new translations, but as revisions of the KJB.

Particular mention should also be made of the care taken by the KJV translators to ensure that their translation was most suitable for reading aloud. They listened to the final drafts of the translation being read aloud to them, verse by verse, to assess their rhythm and balance. It was this above all which ensured that mellifluous quality of the phrasing which has rooted so much of its language in the speech and idioms of the English language—twenty pages from the KJV New Testament in *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, that is, from a text that is of length equivalent to only three or four of Shakespeare's plays.

What worked too was the translators' explicit readiness to recognize that the same Greek word was better rendered differently in different contexts. They themselves made the point with emphasis. "We have not tied ourselves to a uniformity of phrasing, or to an identity of words. … For is the kingdom of God become words or syllables? Why should we be in bondage to them if we may be free, use one precisely when we may use another no less fit, as commodiously?"[15] So, for example, *kauchaomai* is translated as "rejoice in," "glory in," and "joy in" within the same paragraph; *diathēkē* is translated as "covenant" as well as "testament"; *koinōnia* is translated as "communion" and "contribution" as well as "fellowship"; *parakaleō* is rendered as "beseech," "comfort," or "exhort," as the context demanded. In so doing they provided a precedent and model for future translators, to recognize that words function as belonging to particular phrases, sentences, and contexts and not as fixed entities, an insight that had to be learned afresh in the twentieth century.

In short, then, we should not hesitate to laud the achievement of the KJV translators. One could quibble over choices made in particular passages—for example, *hilastērion* translated as "propitiation" rather than Tyndale's "seat of mercy" in Rom 3:25—but overall their success in producing a translation that was so faithful to the Greek text, that shaped the language and literary culture of the English-speaking peoples, and that framed and molded the worship and spirituality of Christians for some three centuries should be trumpeted with delight and enthusiasm in this fourth centenary celebration of the KJB.

What Did Not Work for the Translators?

The scope for interminable arguments about word meanings and translation equivalents is, of course, immense. But most of the instances one could cite are hardly grounds for criticism of the KJV translators so far as their knowledge of Greek and the English usage of the time are concerned. For example, the use of the term *conversation* in the sense of "conduct, way of life" in Gal 1:13, and the rendering of *prokoptein* in the following verse in the sense of "profit," rather than the more obvious "advance": "Ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how … I profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation." Nor is there much point in focusing on additions to the text that simply fill out the meaning of the Greek more fully, as in 1 Pet 4:14.

More complaint could be made about the translation of Matt 23:24, "straining at a gnat," rather than the earlier translations' "straining *out* a gnat"; or about the preference of the latinized "charity" in place of Tyndale's "love" in 1 Cor 13; or about the oddity that while the KJV Old Testament used the names Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, and Jonah, the New Testament calls them Elias, Esaias, Jeremias or Jeremy, Osee, and Jonas, not to mention the translation of "Jesus" in Acts 7:45 and Heb 4:8, when Joshua was intended.[16] A more substantial criticism is the printing of each verse as a paragraph, which as John Locke complained, chopped and minced the text, and made each verse sound like a distinct aphorism, making continuous and coherent reading much more difficult and encouraging the practice of proof texting.[17] So let me simply focus on what seem to me the three principal weaknesses of the KJV New Testament, three aspects of their translation that worked against the translators' ambition to provide as good a translation into English of the original Greek New Testament as was possible.

1. Inadequate Manuscript Base

The first weakness of the KJV New Testament was that it was based on a very inadequate number and quality of Greek manuscripts. Erasmus had only six Greek manuscripts immediately accessible to him in Basel when he produced his first edition of the Greek New Testament. They all dated from the twelfth century or later. He also lacked a complete copy of the book of Revelation and was forced to translate the last six verses back into Greek from the Latin Vulgate in order to complete his edition. It has also

been recognized that Erasmus adjusted the text of his Greek New Testament in many places to correspond with readings found in the Vulgate or as quoted in the church fathers. This is the text that was later referred to as the "received text," becoming known as the "Textus Receptus," and was ceded the authority that that title implied.[18] It was this text, classified by textual scholars as a late Byzantine text-type, that was the Greek text used by the translators of the KJV New Testament. In other words, the KJV translators were unable to fulfill what most of them desired—to produce a translation that was based as closely as possible on the original Greek text.

Of course, more and more Greek manuscripts were discovered in the decades following 1611,[19] but it was not till the middle of the nineteenth century that alternative Greek texts were made more widely available, thanks particularly to the work of Karl Lachmann and Constantin Tischendorff.[20] Particularly important for English translations was *The New Testament in the Original Greek* published by Westcott and Hort in 1881, after twenty-eight years' work, and drawing particularly on the two great fourth-century manuscripts identified by them as primary authorities, Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, the latter discovered only in 1859. The Westcott and Hort text has been the basis for almost all critical editions of the Greek New Testament for the past century. As Bruce Metzger comments: "The international committee that produced the *United Bible Societies* Greek New Testament, not only adopted the Westcott and Hort edition as its basic text, but followed their methodology in giving attention to both external and internal consideration."[21]

The inevitable result has been to undermine the reliability of the KJV New Testament. The obvious examples are well known. The longer ending of Mark's Gospel (Mark 16:9–20) is included without comment, even though there is now more or less universal agreement that this paragraph was added, no earlier than the second century, to round off what to many must have seemed to be Mark's lack of an ending. This addition, but nevertheless part of the AV, gave a credibility to the snake-handling sects in the United States that they could never otherwise have claimed.

The other well-known addition to the Greek New Testament that the KJV incorporated was the famous *comma Johanneum*—1 John 5:7–8—where to the witness of "the Spirit and the water and the blood" is added the witness "in heaven" of "the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." Erasmus had not included this addition in the first two editions of his Greek New Testament, but he added it in the third edition. The story is commonly told that Erasmus had refused to include the

Johannine comma but agreed to do so if it appeared in a single Greek manuscript, one duly being concocted.[22] The story is questioned by Henk de Jonge: that on seeing the manuscript Erasmus did not suspect it as fraudulent and decided to include the comma because he wished to avoid any suspicion of personal unorthodoxy that might undermine the acceptance of his translation.[23] Whatever the facts, it is not in dispute that the comma itself only appears much later in the Greek textual tradition. Nor that Erasmus's third edition established the comma's place in the Textus Receptus. The significance of the addition is, of course, that it inserted a late Trinitarian gloss into the New Testament itself and for the last four centuries gave the doctrine of the Trinity a greater scriptural authority than it would otherwise have had.

Other cases are less well known, but some rather significant. For example, contemporary readers of the New Testament will every so often be puzzled that a verse number is missing from the text, though usually included in a footnote in modern translations. For instance, the spurious statement in Luke 17:36, "Two will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left," can be regarded as a natural elaboration of the preceding verse: "Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and another left" (17:35). By contrast, in modern translations the omission of Acts 8:37—Philip's response to the Ethiopian eunuch, "If you believe with all your heart you may [be baptized]," and the eunuch's reply, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God"—results in the loss of a powerful statement of faith. The omission of this verse in modern translations, however, is not doctrinally motivated but rather an acknowledgment that the text is a late addition of what would otherwise be one of the earliest christological and baptismal confessions. And of the other Western readings of the Greek text of Acts incorporated into the Textus Receptus, one of the more interesting is the note added at Acts 15:34, "It seemed good to Silas to remain there [in Antioch]," which was presumably an early attempt to fit the otherwise puzzling movements of Silas to the story being told.

Other examples:[24]

- In Matt 6:13 the inclusion of the doxology, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen," cloaks the fact, evident from *Didache* and the textual tradition, that the Lord's Prayer was a developing liturgical tradition.
- In Matt 10:3 by giving the name of the tenth of the twelve disciples as "Lebbaeus, who is called Thaddaeus," the KJV adds

to the confusion anyway present in the Gospel traditions over the names of Jesus' twelve disciples.

- In Luke 22:43–44, the account of an angel appearing from heaven, strengthening Jesus in Gethsemane, and of Jesus' sweat dropping to the ground like great drops of blood, and in Luke 23:34, the more sensitive account of the crucified Jesus praying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," no indication is given that the verses are omitted by many of the most respected witnesses, as do modern Greek texts and translations.[25]
- In John 1:18 KJV translates "the only begotten *Son*, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him," whereas the manuscript tradition and other early witnesses make it much the more probable that John wrote, "the only begotten *God*, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known."
- In Rom 11:6 KJV properly translates, "If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace"; but then it includes the rather pedantic later addition, which weakens rather than strengthens Paul's point—"But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."
- The KJV translators declined to use what had been a growing practice among printers since the middle of the sixteenth century to use quotation marks to distinguish spoken or reported speech. One important consequence was that the opening to Paul's counsel on marriage, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman," now regularly indicated in modern translations as one of the issues posed to Paul in his letter to the Corinthians, is too easily read as a statement of Paul's own conviction. Thus read, 1 Cor 7:1 provides one of the principal roots of Paul's negative reputation for misogynism.[26]
- In the hymn in praise of Christ in 1 Tim 3:16, most modern translations have something like "who was revealed in flesh, vindicated in spirit. …" KJV reads, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit," that is, Holy Spirit. But the reading in the Textus Receptus of *theos*, "God," was based on twelfth-century manuscripts and is not attested earlier than the eighth or ninth century. So this further example of the term *theos* being used of the incarnate Christ does not reflect first-century Christology.

So the KJV New Testament has to be reckoned a victim of the almost minimal knowledge of the Greek New Testament manuscript tradition at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The Textus Receptus on which the KJV translators depended was based on too few and too late manuscripts to provide a sound witness to the Greek New Testament writings of the first few centuries of the Christian era. For this, of course, the KJV translators cannot be blamed. They had to work within the severe limitations of the knowledge of the time. But it does mean that any high evaluation placed on the KJV New Testament as closest to the original Greek of the New Testament writings is misleading, misinformed, and basically wrong. The quality of the KJV translation of the Greek texts available to the translators is certainly to be lauded. But the discovery of many hundreds more Greek manuscripts as well as early church witnesses to the New Testament text, and the advancement of textual criticism enabling a clear judgment on the age and reliability of these manuscripts and witnesses, have revealed just how inadequate was the Textus Receptus as a witness to the original Greek texts, and therefore also how inadequate was the KJV translation that depended on the Textus Receptus.

The criticism should not be pressed too far. For the textual criticism that climaxed in the Westcott and Hort edition of the New Testament Greek text had already realized that the goal of recapturing the original text was unrealistic. The Greek text for modern use could at best be only eclectic. Moreover, in the latter decades of the twentieth century it became clear that the differences in the Greek texts attested in the manuscript and early church tradition should not be regarded as simply scribal errors or corruptions. Each of these texts formed the New Testament Scripture or some part of the New Testament Scripture for particular churches. So even twelfth-century manuscripts formed part or the entirety of the New Testament for various churches. And the KJV New Testament is not so much the translation of a significantly deformed Greek text as it is the translation of the Greek text used by churches of the late Byzantine period. All translations, indeed, because of the eclectic character of the Greek text translated, are in actuality an amazing selection of a kaleidoscope of New Testaments that functioned as the word of God for many churches over many centuries. That these New Testaments were at some remove from the New Testament writings that circulated in the latter half of the first century should not be allowed to obscure this fact. The New Testament, as a living tradition, was historically much more flexible than the ideal of recapturing an original autograph ever envisaged or allowed.[27]

That said, we still have to accept that the KJV translation of the New Testament was based on a reconstructed Greek text at some remove from what Paul and the others had written or dictated. And the translators' ambition to make available the New Testament as known and used in the early church was unavoidably seriously flawed in execution. The inadequacies of the Textus Receptus meant that the KJV translation of the New Testament could not work as well as the translations of the late nineteenth century and beyond.

2. Political and Religious Pressure

A second weakness of the KJV, which has been given some justifiable attention in the midst of the quatercentenary celebrations, is the degree to which the translators allowed themselves to be leaned on for political and ecclesiastical reasons.

Thus the term *ekklēsia* is uniformly translated as "church," apart from the three occurrences in Acts 19, where the term refers to the citizen "assembly" in Ephesus. Tyndale was much more alert to the way in which the term would have been heard in the first century by rendering *ekklēsia* as "congregation" or "company." But the KJV translators were forbidden to follow Tyndale, even when it meant rendering the reference in Stephen's speech to the assembly of the Israelites in the wilderness as "the church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38). Subsequent ecclesiology was being read back not only into the Christian assemblies of the first century but also into the assembly of Israel at Sinai.

In Paul's description of the body of Christ in Rom 12, KJV translates verse 4, "all members [of the body] do not have the same *praxis*," as "all members have not the same office" (similarly Tyndale). This despite the fact that KJV elsewhere recognizes the natural sense of *praxis* as "activity" or "action," by rendering it as "deed."[28] But when the image is of the body, and what the members of the body do, the natural sense is "function": "all members of the body do not have the same function." Paul's point is clearly that as members of the body of Christ, all Christians have different contributions to make, different charisms to exercise for the benefit of the body as a whole, just as the members of the human body have different functions, without which the whole body cannot properly function. To translate *praxis* here as "office" was to ignore the distinction between "charism" and "office," and to limit the range of charisms, which Paul saw as vital to the health of the body of Christ, to officially recognized orders

and licensed offices. The ecclesiological bias of the KJV translators is as evident here as in any other passage.

A similar example may be 1 Cor 16:15, where Paul commends the household of Stephanas because "they *etaxan* themselves to the service of the saints." Here KJV uses the Latinism, "they addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints," where the Latin *addico* can mean "to deliver, yield, or resign" something to someone, either in a good or a bad sense. So in a good sense, "to devote, consecrate to"; whereas the bad sense is clearly the root of the English term "addict." But the Greek verb *tassein* has the basic sense of "bring about an order of things by arranging"; so "arrange, put in place." The phrase used here, *tassein tina eis*, would most naturally be heard by the audiences to whom Paul's letter was read in the sense "assign or appoint someone to some function or role." So although modern translations uniformly translate *etaxan* in 1 Cor 16:15 as "devote"—"they devoted themselves to the service of the saints"—it is hard to escape the implication that the service (or ministry) of Stephanas's household was one to which they had not been appointed by some other recognized official in the Corinthian congregation, but was a service (or ministry) to which they had appointed themselves. Here presumably is another example of what most of the KJV translators would regard as an irregular kind of appointment, unacceptable to the powers that be in the Church of England, of which King James I was the supreme governor.

Similarly in Eph 4:11–12, which speaks of the gifts given by the ascended Christ, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, "for the *katartismos* of the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ." Here *katartismos* is rendered by KJV as "perfecting": "for the perfecting of the saints," and (as a separate outcome) "for the work of the ministry"—notice the definite article, not in the Greek, "the work of *the* ministry." But *katartizein* has more the sense of "put in order, equip," and *katartismos* more the sense of "preparation" or "equipping." This was recognized by Tyndale: "that the saints might have all things necessary to work and minister withal, to the edifying of the body of Christ." And it is so recognized by modern translations: that the gifts were given "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (NRSV); "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (NIV); "to equip God's people for work in his service, for the building up of the body of Christ" (REB). But presumably the KJV translators balked at the suggestion that the saints at large, God's people generally, should have ministry or an integral role in building up

the body of Christ, and at any suggestion that the function of the ministry gifts (apostles, pastors, etc.) given by the ascended Christ was to equip the saints for such service.

Another example of later ecclesiology ignoring first-century usage and reading back subsequent church order into the New Testament—thereby, of course, gaining scriptural authorization for that church order—was the KJV translation of *episkopos*. The KJV translators, along with translators before (Tyndale) and after, recognized that the first-century meaning would be better captured by the translation "overseer," as in Acts 20:28. But they all translated "bishop" in Phil 1:1 and the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:7), though in 1 Pet 2:25 most modern versions translate *episkopos* as "guardian" or "overseer." Bauer's *Lexicon* justly comments: "The ecclesiastical loanword 'bishop' is too technical and loaded with late historical baggage for precise signification of usage of *episkopos* and cognates in our lit., esp. the NT."[29] Here again we may judge that ecclesiastical and royal politics were the determining factor in what should have been determined primarily on philological grounds. It was James I, after all, who declared with some vehemence his preference for English episcopacy over Scottish presbytery in the famous phrase, "No bishops, no king."

Less dubious is the rendering of *presbyteros* as "elder" in passages like Acts 14:23 and the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim 5:17, 19; Titus 1:5). Here the KJV translators are to be congratulated for their refusal to render *presbyteros* as "priest." On the other hand, however, in 1 Tim 5:1 *presbyteros* much more obviously has the meaning of "older man": "Do not speak harshly to an older man, but appeal to him as to a father, to younger men as brothers." Presumably the sense of "elder" as an official church office later in the same chapter was too compelling for the KJV translators: "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father." Similarly in 1 Pet 5:5 the counsel that those who are younger should submit to *presbyteroi* is most obviously to be read as an exhortation to the younger members of the community to respect the wisdom and authority of the older members of the community. But here again KJV renders, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves to the elder." Again it seems to be the ecclesiology of ecclesiastical office that determined the translation, rather than any historical recognition that in the ancient world old age in itself carried an aura of authority, old men as "elders" because they were old men.

A final example of what did not work in the KJV translation was its rendering of passages that speak of women in ministry. In Rom 16, which has become such an important testimony to women's ministry in the earliest

days of Christianity, KJV reads the text from the more traditionally patriarchal perspective. Phoebe, "*diakonos* of the church in Cenchreae" (16:1), is described simply as "servant of the church," even though as an ecclesiastical title *diakonos* would be much more naturally rendered as "deacon" or "minister," as KJV does elsewhere. And Paul's further reference to Phoebe as "*prostatis* of many and of me" (16:2) is rendered as "succourer of many and of myself also," even though *prostatis* means literally "one who stands before" and is more naturally rendered as "leader" or "guardian," "patron" or "benefactor." KJV, in other words, obscures the fact that Phoebe is the first Christian to be publicly named as "deacon" and that as a *prostatis* she had an eminent social status.

To be fair to KJV, it goes on to record that in Rom 16:7 the two of note among the apostles are Andronicus and Junia (not the masculine Junias as RV, Moffatt, Knox, RSV, NEB, JB, NIV continued to translate). However, by translating *syngeneis mou* as "my kinsmen," rather than "my kinsfolk" or "my relatives," the fact that the woman Junia is described as an apostle, "eminent among the apostles," was obscured, and the possibility of recognizing that one of the first apostles was a woman, with all the corollaries for women's ministry, was effectively lost, and obscured by the succession of nineteenth- and twentieth-century translations for another century. Despite its inadequacies, KJV deserves more credit at this point than most of its successors.

In short, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the KJV New Testament translators allowed ecclesiastical and royal politics, not to mention traditional patriarchal disparagement of women in the ministry, to bias their rendition of the Greek New Testament and to obscure the degree to which the New Testament actually gave warrant to other understandings of church ministry than what was allowed by the establishment. Here too the KJV translation did not work as it should have.

3. Antiquated Language

A third weakness of the KJV brings me back to my teenage dissatisfaction with its language—the "thous" and the "thees," the "-eths" and the "-ests," and so on. For that language was already passing from common usage by the end of the sixteenth century. As David Crystal further notes:

> The style of the King James Bible is much more conservative than that found in Shakespeare. … [The translators] aimed for a dignified, not a

> popular style, and often opted for older forms of the language, when modern alternatives were available. … Similarly, the King James Bible looks backwards in its grammar, and preserves many of the forms and constructions which were falling out of use elsewhere.[30]

So the language of the KJV was already dated when it was first produced. Of course the opting for a more dignified, rather than a popular, style made the KJV much more suited to its chief purpose of providing the text for formal liturgical use. The translators certainly did not want to provide a seventeenth-century equivalent of the Good News Bible. The trouble was, however, that the KJV would determine and provide the language of the church and its worship for many years to come. And over the centuries into the twentieth century this meant that the language of the church and its worship was becoming more and more dated, less and less the language of the people.

The translators' practice of looking backward for their language choices had its benefits and attractions, of course. To have a language dedicated to the business of worship meant that those familiar with the language could switch into it without difficulty and in so doing could switch into the appropriate worship mode. But it did have the unfortunate corollary of encouraging those devoted to and wholly dependent on the language and use of the KJV to express their worship and spirituality, to infer that this language was the only appropriate or even only legitimate language to use in formal worship. A depressing consequence, for example, was that in missions in Africa it was naturally assumed that the converts had to be taught Elizabethan English in order to worship the Anglican way, just as the Presbyterians assumed that converts had to be taught the metrical psalms in order to worship God appropriately! No wonder independent Christian churches soon developed.

I was reminded of another advantage of KJV English in a conversation with an eminent New Testament scholar at a conference in the 1970s. He spoke strongly and with some passion in defense of the KJV, and particularly of its "thous" and "thees." For him they functioned as an English equivalent to the German *du* form, that is, as the language appropriate for close or intimate relationships. The "you" form, like the German *Sie*, was too formal and distant for worship. That drew me up short and made me a little more hesitant about abandoning the KJV for the RSV, even though the RSV retained the "thees" and "thous" in language addressed to God.

The key problem remained, however, that the continuing use of the KJV gave the impression that the language of the Bible was a holy language, a language different from everyday language—with the negative implication that it was less suited to speak to the realities of everyday contemporary life. This might have been less serious so long as the Greek of the New Testament was likewise regarded as a different kind of Greek from Classical Greek, and so as a special spiritual language, "Holy Ghost Greek." But Adolf Deissmann in particular had effectively destroyed that illusion by his study of Greek papyri found in Egypt at the end of the nineteenth century.[31] The great bulk of these papyri were private documents—letters, invitations, petitions, contracts, deeds, leases, lists, tickets, birth notices, and so on. They demonstrated that far from being a sacred language, a specialized form of Greek, somewhat remote from the popular Greek of the marketplace, New Testament Greek on the contrary was the language that the common people used in everyday life. This presumably would be one of the principal reasons why the good news preached by the first Christians made such a huge impact on the Greek-speakers of the day. The gospel was preached in the language of the people. And it was the same language that was used in the New Testament; the New Testament documents were written in colloquial Greek. They were the more readily understandable because they were written in the language that the recipients and auditors of these writings used in their everyday communication.

The somewhat tragic effect of the supremacy established by the KJV was that it increasingly ran counter to that vital character of the original New Testament writings. Far from communicating its message in the language of the people, as the translators intended,[32] the KJV latterly was becoming more and more of a hindrance to such communication. Tyndale's ambition to make the boy that drove the plough to "know more of the scripture" than "a learned man," echoing Erasmus's similar ambition,[33] reflected the character of the Greek New Testament writings much more closely than the KJV sought to achieve. If the KJV ever communicated the New Testament writings to the peoples of the English-speaking world to best effect in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it was working ever less effectively from the second half of the nineteenth century onward. Effective communication to those outside the circle of faith may not be the primary objective of a translation of the New Testament, and certainly popularizing renditions of the New Testament can often be self-defeating or counterproductive. But when one of the primary characteristics of the Greek New Testament writings was that they were written in the everyday

language of the people of the day, then it can be fairly concluded that a translation that fails to reproduce that characteristic does not work as well as it should.

Conclusion

So, in sum, let us laud the KJV, especially in this quatercentenary year, the mellifluous quality of its prose, the many phrases we still use that originated in the KJV (and Tyndale) and that give an added spice to our speech, the way it shaped both Christian worship and the English language for several centuries. Like the Book of Common Prayer, the KJV is still good to use and gives a special resonance to commemorative occasions. But it is no longer the best rendition of what we now know to be the Greek text of the New Testament, with ecclesiastical and patriarchal limitations that fail to reflect the rich diversity of the New Testament itself, and a language that disconnects rather than connects with the language of everyday.

Notes

1. There was a succession of English translations made by private individuals from early in the eighteenth century; see Edgar J. Goodspeed, *The Making of the English New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1925), ch. 6; F. F. Bruce, *The English Bible: A History of Translations* (London: Lutterworth, 1961), 128–34. On early twentieth-century translations see Goodspeed, ch. 9; and Bruce, chs. 11–12.

2. This was not untypical of the fierce criticisms to which the RSV was subjected; see, e.g., Bruce, *English Bible,* 195–99; O. T. Allis, *Revision or New Translation? The Revised Standard Version of 1946, a Comparative Study* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1948); Edward F. Hills, *The King James Version Defended: A Christian View of the New Testament Manuscripts* (Des Moines: Christian Research, 1956). Similarly for the NEB; see Ian R. K. Paisley, *The New English Bible New Testament: Version or Perversion?* (Belfast: Puritan Printing, 1964).

3. P. E. Terrell, *Paul's Parallels: An Echoes Synopsis* (London: Continuum, 2009), xxxv.

4. Robert McCrum, *The Observer*, Sunday, 21 November 2010.

5. Quoted by Bruce Metzger in his preface to the NRSV.

6. Harold Bloom, *The Shadow of a Great Rock: A Literary Appreciation of the King James Bible* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

7. Angela Partington, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (4th ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

8. On Wyclif/Wycliffe see Bruce, *English Bible*, ch. 2; for earlier English versions see ch. 1.

9. In the preface to the Douay-Rheims NT the Protestant translators are charged

with "corrupting both the letter and the sense by false translation, adding, subtracting, altering, transposing, pointing, and all other guileful means, especially where it serveth for the advantage of their private opinions" (Goodspeed, *Making,* 36; Bruce, *English Bible,* 114); Bruce notes that Sir Thomas More had earlier attacked Tyndale's version in similar terms as not the NT at all but a cunning counterfeit, perverted in the interests of heresy (40). Goodspeed comments on the Douay version: "the distinctive feature of the new version is its Latin element. … Not only is the Douay a translation of a translation, but … a translation which needed to be translated, for the passages are unintelligible to anyone unacquainted with the Latin. … The bane of the Douay New Testament was the mistaken idea, frankly expressed by its makers, that much that is in the New Testament cannot be successfully put into English" (*Making,* 37–39; further Bruce, *English Bible*, 117–23).

10. On these versions see further Bruce, *English Bible*, chs. 5–6.

11. David Daniell, *Tyndale's New Testament* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), xii; see also Bruce, *English Bible,* 86–95.

12. "It is not too much to say that William Tyndale wrote nine-tenths of the King James New Testament" (Goodspeed, *Making,* 51); Bruce's quotation to the same effect (*English Bible*, 44) is from J. Isaacs, "The Sixteenth-Century English Versions," in *The Bible in Its Ancient and English Versions* (ed. H. Wheeler Robinson; Oxford: Clarendon, 1940), 160.

13. Goodspeed gives as examples "impenitent," "concupiscence," "remission," "expectation," "emulation," "contribution" (*Making*, 39).

14. David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 64.

15. Quoted by Crystal, ibid.; fuller quotation in Bruce, *English Bible*, 104–6.

16. Goodspeed, *Making*, 42–4; Bruce, *English Bible*, 98.

17. Goodspeed, *Making*, 27–29, adding his own terse critique to that of Locke, *Essay for the Understanding of St. Paul's Epistles by Consulting St. Paul Himself*. Bruce notes that in the KJV paragraph marks indicating the beginning of each full paragraph are used up to Acts 20:36, but none thereafter (*English Bible*, 108). Goodspeed goes on to criticize the RV for replacing KJV's too many paragraphs with too few (*Making*, 85).

18. For greater detail see Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament* (trans. Erroll F. Rhodes; 2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 3–6, who also note that the Textus Receptus retained its authority into the twentieth century (19).

19. The fifth-century Codex Alexandrinus became available in England within twenty years of the KJV's publication (Goodspeed, *Making*, 52).

20. Aland and Aland, *Text*, 11–14.

21. Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).

22. E.g., ibid., 101.

23. H. J. de Jonge, "Erasmus and the Comma Johanneum," *Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses* 56 (1980): 381–89: "For the sake of his ideal Erasmus chose to avoid any occasion for slander rather than persisting in philological accuracy and thus condemning himself to impotence. That was the reason why Erasmus included the

Comma Johanneum even though he remained convinced that it did not belong to the original text of l John" (385).

24. Aland and Aland list the verses omitted from the text and relegated to the apparatus of the more recent Greek New Testaments (*Text*, 297–312).

25. On Dean Burgon's indignation that Westcott and Hort should have deemed Luke 23:34 to be almost certainly spurious, see Bruce, *English Bible*, 140–41.

26. For more on this see Roger Omanson, "The King James New Testament: How a Translation Determined Christian Thought on Marriage for Nearly Four Hundred Years" (paper delivered at the 2010 Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Atlanta).

27. "Every manuscript of the New Testament contains a 'living' text" (Aland and Aland, *Text*, 14, 69–70).

28. Luke 23:41; Acts 19:18; Rom 8:13; Col 3:9.

29. W. Bauer, Frederick Willliam Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (3rd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 379.

30. Crystal, *English Language*, 64.

31. G. Adolf Deissmann, *Bible Studies: Contributions, Chiefly from Papyri and Inscriptions, to the History of the Language, the Literature, and the Religion of Hellenistic Judaism and Primitive Christianity* (trans. Alexander Grieve; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901).

32. The preface of the KJV expresses the aim that it should be "understood even of the very vulgar" (Goodspeed, *Making*, 50).

33. In the preface to his 1516 Greek New Testament Erasmus wrote: "I totally disagree with those who are unwilling that the sacred scriptures, translated into the vulgar tongue, should be read by private individuals, as if Christ had taught such subtle doctrines that they can with difficulty be understood by a very few theologians, or as if the strength of the Christian religion lay in men's ignorance of it. … I would wish all women even, to read the gospel and the Epistles of Paul. I wish they were translated into all languages of all peoples, that they might be read and known not merely by the Scotch and Irish, but even by the Turks and Saracens. … I wish that the ploughman might sing parts of them at his plough, and the weaver at his shuttle, and that the traveler might beguile with their narration the weariness of his way" (quoted by Goodspeed, *Making*, 3; slightly different rendering in Bruce, *English Bible*, 29).

The KJV and Anglo-Jewish Translations of the Bible: A Unique and Uniquely Fruitful Connection

Leonard J. Greenspoon

In a recent study of the relationship between the King James Version and English-language biblical translations by/for Jews, I concluded: "In no other language or culture does a single non-Jewish version exert such influence over Jewish translations."[1] In order to establish a firm foundation for this declaration, two propositions must be demonstrated. The first, which is implicit in my statement, is that the KJV exerted a significant influence on subsequent Jewish English-language texts. The second, which I might term explicit, is that there are no parallels for such extensive influence by any other non-Jewish version in another language or culture. In this article I will not only cover the factual data in support of these propositions, but also attempt to explain why a particular confluence of factors led to this unique circumstance within the English-speaking world.[2]

The first edition of the KJV appeared in 1611. On the basis of a synagogue pamphlet dated to 1776, in which all English-language citations of the Bible were identical to the KJV, it would appear that British Jews, when in need of an English text of the Hebrew Bible, made use of the KJV for well over a century and a half after that date. Although reliance on the KJV does indeed seem to characterize the period prior to the 1780s, the time frame for such reliance can be reduced by several decades when we recall that Jews, who had been expelled from England in the thirteenth century, were not officially readmitted until the mid-1600s (that is, roughly a half century after the KJV was first published).[3]

One of the few scholars to have investigated this topic is Raphael Loewe. In support of the Jewish community's early reliance on the KJV, he astutely observes:

> there can be little doubt that, as Menasseh b. Israel's Spanish Pentateuch remorsely [*sic*] slipped into the penumbra of third-generation sentimentalism, English Sephardim (most of whom will have needed a crib for the Hebrew) will have been relying on the A.V. Amongst Ashkenazim, the printed Yiddish translation had been used almost exclusively by women; and as, during the second half of the eighteenth century, poor Jewish immigrants from north-eastern Europe climbed through two or three generations into the Anglo-Jewish *bourgeoisie,* residual attitudes and a different educational philosophy will, to some extent, have delayed (but could not prevent) their resort to a Bible in English, after real competence in Hebrew had been lost. The point that is here being made is that English-speaking Jewry distinguishes itself from the Jewries of other protestant countries, by its acceptance, apparently without significant protest or misgivings, of the national vernacular Bible of its Christian environment; it produced nothing comparable to Mendelssohn's German translation until the American Jewish version of the early [I would say, mid-]twentieth century.[4]

Anglo-Jewish Versions in the Late Eighteenth Century

As the Jewish community grew more rooted in the English soil, it sought to cast off at least some of the trappings that identified its members as immigrants. A second synagogue pamphlet, this one dating to 1790 and exhibiting a slightly revised KJV, encourages us to consider that, however tentative in its beginnings, from an intra-Jewish perspective the preparation of English versions of the Bible was not an isolated event. English-language sermons and English-Hebrew prayer books were being produced almost simultaneously—and sometimes under the same auspices.[5]

At the same time, the very production of a Jewish version of any sort in English was at least in part a response to outside forces. In this connection, special attention may be given to the founding of the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1804 and the American Bible Society a few years later (in 1816). One of the primary purposes of such societies was to make Bibles available to the largest number of people at the smallest cost. With this in mind, Bible societies spurred impressive technological developments leading to the mass production of printed materials. Since missionaries—as, for example, the very active London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews (or simply the London Jews Society)—frequently used such inexpensive editions of the Bible in English and in other popular languages, Jews might well have perceived the need

to produce (if not mass-produce) texts of their own to combat the growing number of "Christian" Bibles.[6]

It is then safe to conclude that the late-eighteenth/early-nineteenth-century developments that culminated in distinctive English-language Bibles for Jews were the result of forces at work both inside and outside the Jewish community itself. In real life, if I may use that term, circumstances are rarely so simple that an either/or exclusive explanation is valid. Although some scholars strive to isolate such forces, in real life circumstances are rarely so simple or neat.[7]

To return to the eighteenth century: The first of these productions consisted of the KJV and the Hebrew text on facing pages, with notes drawn from Jewish sources, typically Rashi, at the bottom of the page. The titles of such works did not perhaps immediately identify them as a Jewish version. Here, for example, is part of the title of David Levi's Genesis of 1787: "The First Book of Moses, called Genesis, in the Hebrew, with English Translation on the Opposite Page. With Notes, Explanatory, Exegetical, Critical, and Grammatical." Levi's work did include a title page in Hebrew, and the work opened from left to right. These were sure indicators of an intended Jewish audience.

It is an open question whether it is appropriate to call Levi a translator. The same holds true for others whose work appeared at the same time, especially members of the Alexander family. Perhaps a more appropriate designation, to use a modern term, is packager, for these individuals essentially packaged the KJV in a format that, they reckoned, would appeal to a niche audience, in this case English-speaking Jews.

It is also worthy of note that Levi, along with several other early "translators," was not always on the best of terms with the British rabbinical establishment. In addition to some disagreements of a decidedly personal nature, these rabbis may, at least at this point, have looked askance at these attempts to judaize what is clearly a Christian text.[8] Levi may have had such thoughts in mind as he subtly enhanced his role from notes corrector to text translator in subsequent editions of his work.[9]

It was left to Isaac Delgado to produce the first freestanding work that differed at all from KJV. This can be seen from a partial citation of the characteristically lengthy title of his work: "A New English Translation of the Pentateuch: Being a Thorough Correction of the Present Translation, Wherever it deviates from the genuine sense of the Hebrew Expressions, or where it renders obscure the Meaning of the Text; or, lastly, when it occasions a seeming Contradiction." In spite of the seemingly clear import

of the title, this is not in fact a continuous text; rather, Delgado reproduces only verses from the KJV for which he offers a new translation or a new interpretation.

A few examples from his preface indicate his modus operandi. At Exod 32:29 Delgado insists that the KJV wording, "For Moses had said," is insufficient to alert readers to the fact that this verse belongs sequentially before and not after the preceding verse. He would write: "Moreover, Moses had said," or "Moses had also said." At Judg 9:28, in an admittedly difficult grammatical context, the KJV translators (among others) rendered the particle *'ēt* as the marker for the accusative case, where Delgado insists that here, as often elsewhere (so he believed), it is used for the nominative; hence, "the very man." In Ps 76:4 (MT 5) the KJV "thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey" becomes "more terrible and excellent" in Delgado, a change justified by the transposition of letters in a Hebrew root. It is not clear whether Delgado's "corrections," taken individually or cumulatively, constitute an advance in Bible translation. But, given their undeniable reliance on the KJV as their starting point, these emended verses, along with the vast majority of the KJV that Delgado left untouched, demonstrate how firmly the KJV and its diction were ensconced within the strata of late-nineteenth-century Anglo-Judaism to whom Delgado sought to appeal. Moreover, the entrepreneurial Delgado had a wider audience in mind—this volume was dedicated to the Lord Bishop of Salisbury and contains a lengthy list of subscribers, many of whom were not Jewish.[10]

Jewish Translations in England during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century

We turn next to 1834, when Solomon Bennett published a pamphlet, prominently dedicated to His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, with the title (here substantially abbreviated) *Specimen of a New Version of the Hebrew Bible*. Among Bennett's innovations are two from the Servant Song contained in Isa 53. At verse 9 he has, "And he delivered himself to the grave like wicked men; but suffered death on account of his riches; though he committed no violence, nor was there deceit in his mouth." Verse 12 in Bennett's edition reads, "Therefore will I reward him publicly; and he shall divide the spoil with the mighty; because he has exposed his soul unto death; he was numbered amongst transgressors; though he bare the sins of many others, and made intercession for transgressors." Although

Bennett was more venturesome than Delgado had been several decades earlier, Bennett's text notably echoes some of the KJV's most memorable phrases, such as "neither was any deceit in his mouth" (from v. 9) and "made intercession for the transgressors" (from v. 12).

Five years later, in 1839, Selig Newman published his succinctly titled, *Emendations of the Authorised Version of the Old Testament*.[11] Admittedly, at certain passages Newman is fiery in his denunciation of the KJV. As an example, we look at his revision and supporting analysis at Exod 11:2, 12:35, and 36 (as earlier in Exod 3):

> [There are many passages where the KJV] translators were either decidedly wrong, or where the meaning in the original is dubious, they have not given the happiest rendering. … [Such cases] may prove dangerous to the infidel, by strengthening him in his unbelief, as well as to the believer, by raising doubts in his mind, of the authenticity of a book, which apparently contains so many incongruities. For example: Ex. xi.2, 35, 36, reads according to the version, "One shall borrow of his, or her neighbour"; but the meaning of שאל in the original is not borrow, but ask; i.e. "One shall ask or demand." This is perfectly in accordance with justice … whilst the permission or order to borrow without intending to restore, being a licence to defraud, could not have emanated from the fountain of justice.[12]

Almost a hundred years later, J. H. Hertz, then chief rabbi of the British Empire, wrote in similar fashion against this same KJV rendering:

> [The KJV] translates, "every woman shall borrow of her neighbour." This translation is thoroughly mischievous and misleading. If there was any borrowing, it was on the part of the Egyptians, who had been taking the labour of the Israelites without recompense. … [Exodus 3:]21 and 22 lend a poetic and unforgettable touch of beauty to the going out of Egypt; and yet these verses, as few others, have been misunderstood and been looked upon as a "blot" on the moral teaching of Scripture. … In modern times, enemies of the Bible vie with one another in finding terms strong enough in which to condemn the "deceit" practised on the Egyptians.[13]

From Newman's perspective, and he was not alone, the stakes were equally high at Judg 11:31, where Jephthah's vow is softened through the introduction of a nonfatal alternative: "Whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me … shall surely be the Lord's, OR [rather than "and"] I will offer it up for a burnt offering." Nonetheless, it is important

to notice that when, because of sharp theological or other differences with the KJV translators, Newman parted company with them, he nonetheless retained as much KJV diction and style as possible. Thus it is that his "anti-KJV" rhetoric was not consistently matched by the "revised" biblical text Newman offered.

It was just two years after the publication of Newman's work, in 1841, that an entire biblical book was produced in "an independent Jewish translation" (the quoted words are J. Hertz's),[14] with David Aaron de Sola's *Genesis*. De Sola came from a well-connected Sephardic family. This is the beginning of Genesis in de Sola's rendering, which was in turn used in some later Jewish versions: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. But the earth was without form and a confused mass; darkness was on the surface of the deep, and the spirit of God hovering on the surface of the waters. God said: 'Let light be'; and light was." As was the case with earlier Jewish "revisions" cited above, de Sola's rendering is not identical to the KJV. But his changes, which seem motivated in least in part by a desire to reflect more closely the underlying Hebrew text, are far from radical departures from the KJV and surely do not constitute, individually or collectively, a repudiation of the 1611 text.

Jewish Translations in England during the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

Jewish translators, as much as they were concerned with combating inimical individuals and movements outside their religion, were also finding a place for their works at the highest levels within the Jewish establishment. See, for example, *The Way of Faith* by David Asher, whose version was among those influenced by de Sola. The last edition of Asher's work appeared in 1848. Its title page includes this endorsement: "Specifically sanctioned by the Rev. Dr. Adler, Chief Rabbi of the United Congregations of the British Empire." Similar wording is found in Abraham Benisch's Pentateuch of the next decade: "Newly Translated. Under the Supervision of the Rev. the Chief Rabbi" (on this point, Benisch writes in his preface: "The proof sheets were submitted to the Rev. the Chief Rabbi, whose suggestions were implicitly complied with in all those particulars bearing on religious subjects"). Several decades later, in 1881, Michael Friedlander's *Jewish Family Bible* "is printed with the sanction of the Rev. Dr. Adler, the Chief Rabbi."

The use of the term *sanction* (or similar wording) on the title pages of these English-language Bibles parallels, in my view, the "authorization"

granted to the KJV, with this significant difference: unlike the Anglican "authorized"—for use in churches—the Jewish "sanctioned" centered on use at home and in schools; so Asher's text was "intended for the use of Jewish Schools and Families." No English version, not even one translated by/for Jews, was intended to usurp the central place of the Hebrew text in synagogue worship.

In addition to providing parallels to KJV's authorization, such versions also offer another indication that English-language versions had been adopted by the Jewish establishment. This can also be detected in the professional and biographical profiles of key figures: translator Marcus Kalisch served for several years as secretary to the chief rabbi, after which he held posts as tutor and literary adviser to the Rothschild family; Hermann Gollancz, who received a knighthood in 1923, was the first Jew to obtain the Lit.D. degree from the University of London and was a professor at University College, London, in addition to being rabbi at several prominent synagogues; and Michael Friedlander had as his son-in-law Moses Gaster, renowned (if somewhat contentious) scholar and Sephardic chief rabbi in London.[15] Thus it is that Bible translations among English-speaking Jews moved up the social and religious ladder, to arrive at a high rung—just as was true of the KJV within the larger world of Anglican influence.

Michael Friedlander's version is titled the *Jewish Family Bible* (see also Abraham Benisch's *Jewish School and Family Bible*). This title is in keeping with the larger subgenre or category of Family Bibles, which represented a Victorian phenomenon that sought to market the King James or Authorized Version to middle-class English men and women.[16] Thus it was that Jewish translators sought not only to retain substantial portions of the KJV text, but also to emulate the latest in KJV packaging and marketing strategies.

The pattern of Jewish versions during the latter half of the nineteenth century is not nearly as clear as their enhanced pedigree. In the always astute judgment of Rabbi Hertz, the KJV "revisions" of Gollancz (1880) and Friedlander (1881), for example, "were practically limited to the correction of Christological passages."[17] It is not entirely clear whether here Rabbi Hertz is being descriptive or dismissive. Although he, like all of the other Jewish translators and editors mentioned, could on occasion be highly critical of the KJV, Hertz did adopt the text (in its 1885 revised form) for the early editions of his widely used Soncino Torah commentary.

Abraham Elzas, who produced editions of Proverbs, Job, and several of the Minor Prophets during the first half of the 1870s, characteristi-

cally strayed only slightly from the wording of the KJV, as can be seen from his rendering of Prov 31:30–31: "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; A woman that feareth the Lord she will be praised. Give ye unto her the fruit of her hands, And let her deeds praise her in the gates!" On the other hand, the versions produced by Marcus Kalisch, beginning with his Exodus volume of 1855, tended to separate themselves in a conscious manner from the pattern established by the KJV translators. This, for example, is his rendering of Gen 1:2: "The earth was emptiness and dreariness."

It is uncertain how influential the versions of an Elzas or Kalisch were within their contemporary communities. When an edition was extensively marketed for Jews, there were limitations, sometimes imposed not by the translators but by their community, on the quantity and the extent of differences between the new version and the well-known KJV. The successive editions of Abraham Benisch's work are most instructive in this context. In part, he was concerned, as were translators before and after him, that distinctive Jewish understandings of the text were lost in versions prepared by non-Jews. He cites as examples Lev 23:40, where KJV's "boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees and willows of the brook," fails to do justice either to the Jewish experience of Sukkot or to Benisch's careful philological analysis of the passage; and Lev 23:15, where the rendering "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath" does not accord with rabbinic calculations for determining the time between Passover and Shavuot. This latter passage continues to be a point of contention in some contemporary Jewish versions, where questions can reasonably be raised of fidelity to the plain meaning of the text (*peshat*) "vs." rabbinic understanding.[18]

In 1854 Abraham Benisch offered a second edition of his English-language translation of the Bible. In his preface he observed:

> The Anglo-Jewish community, in common with all other religious denominations whose vernacular is the English tongue, are so wedded to the diction of the authorised version [AV or KJV] that every departure from its phraseology, however well-founded, seems to grate upon their ears. For this reason we have in this version restored the renderings of the Anglican translation in all those cases where it can be done without doing violence to the principle of fidelity. This is a sacrifice which we regret, but which appeared to us absolutely necessary, if we did not wish unconsciously to themselves to bias against this Jewish translation the conservative feelings of many co-religionists in whose eyes, from

> long association, the Anglican Version, despite its manifest unfitness for Jewish families and schools, is invested with a kind of semi-sacredness.[19]

Given the reticence and restraint generally characteristic of prefaces or introductions to Bible translations, this is quite an admission. The Anglo-Jewish community had spoken: we want our own English-language Bible, but it should look and sound and feel like the KJV. Moreover, contemporary Jewish translators in America largely followed their lead.

The JPS Translation of 1917

This connection between the Protestant King James Version and Jewish translations into English is nowhere more apparent than in the edition the Jewish Publication Society of America (JPS) brought out in 1917. As I have shown elsewhere, the connection is profound: a verse-by-verse comparison between the Jewish version of 1917 and the English Revised Version, the Protestant revision of the KJV from 1885, reveals word-for-word agreement in most passages. This accorded well with the goals of the JPS leadership, who sought the speedy production of a Jewish version that, especially when leather-bound and gilt-edged, would find the same prominent place on the library shelf in middle- and upper-class Jewish homes that the KJV occupied in proper Protestant abodes.[20]

It is interesting that JPS did not explicitly highlight this agreement in its publicity, although there was some talk of styling this edition a revision rather than a (fresh) translation. It may well have been more in JPS's perceived self-interest not to make explicit connections between its "translation" and the KJV; rather, in the volume's introduction and in accompanying publicity, greatest attention was drawn to the translators' use of Jewish exegesis and philological insights.

In fact, editor-in-chief Max L. Margolis, the only scholarly luminary on the JPS translation committee, was revising the 1885 edition. He had a large-type printing of this version pasted, page-by-page, in an album. Whenever he or one of his fellow editors suggested a change in this edition's wording, he introduced it on the large white paper that made up the album and then drew a line to the corresponding spot in the 1885 edition. Clearly it was the earlier English-language text that formed the basis for Margolis's work. But there is more: where it was necessary for any reason to incorporate materials not found in KJV or its revision, Margolis deliberately chose KJV-sounding language, so as to achieve a text that seamlessly combined

the new with the old. Margolis's wife, Evelyn, recalls that the couple steeped themselves in the language of the KJV so as to achieve this effect.

All of this accorded well with Margolis's view that the KJV should serve as a model for immigrant Jews (Margolis himself was from Lithuania) as they sought to elevate and perfect the English they spoke.[21] Moreover, and this is a point of cardinal importance, the reason that the KJV was uniquely worthy of emulation was its successful transference of so many features from Hebrew into English. Margolis's praise of the KJV in this regard was effusive and frequent. Characteristic of his appraisal is the following: "[The KJV] has an inimitable style and rhythm; the coloring of the original is not obliterated. … What imparts to the English Bible its beauty, aye, its simplicity, comes from the [Hebrew] original."[22] Although I was not able to locate explicitly parallel statements on the part of Anglo-Jewish translators of the previous century, I do not doubt that a number of them shared this sentiment on the part of their American coreligionist in the early twentieth century.

Christian Hebraism and the King James Version

Was Margolis correct in his explicit pronouncement that profound connections linked the Hebrew text (that is, the traditional or Masoretic Text) and the English text (in this case, the KJV)? Moreover, as seems apparent from the context and tenor of Margolis's statement, was this scholar correct in his somewhat less explicit pronouncement that the linkage between the Masoretic Text and KJV, or at least substantial portions of it, was provided by Jewish scholars and Jewish scholarship? Since there were no Jews in England, at least officially, in 1611, and thus no Jews on the KJV translation committees, there may seem to be some reasons to doubt Margolis's perceptiveness in this regard. But a dispassionate examination of the evidence, presented in a somewhat abbreviated form below, demonstrates fully the validity of this insight: although it is true that no Jews served as KJV translators, many members of the Old Testament teams for the KJV were steeped in both the Hebrew language and the exegetical traditions of Judaism. This enthusiastic embrace of Hebraism, especially by Anglican clerics, led the KJV teams charged with preparing the Old Testament translation to adopt "Jewish" readings already incorporated into earlier English-language versions and to seek out others on their own. In the words of one specialist, "Those gifted in Hebrew among the [KJV] translators are almost too many to number."[23]

In this latter connection, it was Jewish exegete and grammarian David Kimchi (twelfth-thirteenth century, also known as Radak) who was, on the whole, most influential.[24] So valued was Kimchi for his lexical, linguistic, and grammatical astuteness that David Daiches speaks of him as "the one Jewish commentator who was universally used by Christian scholars at this time."[25]

Also held in high regard was Rabbi Shlomo Itzhaki (of the eleventh-twelfth century), better known as Rashi. Rashi's interpretations were seen as especially insightful in that they emphasized the *peshat* or plain meaning of the Hebrew Bible.

Let us look more closely at some of the Christian Hebraists among the KJV translators. Among the most notable of this group were John Rainolds (or Reynolds) and Miles Smith, both members of the First Oxford Company, charged with rendering the Hebrew text from Isaiah through Malachi. The head of this company was John Harding, Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford. John Rainolds bequeathed to Corpus Christi College, Oxford, a number of Bibles, including a Hebrew Bible printed in Venice, undoubtedly one of the editions by Daniel Bomberg from the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

Rainolds, who died in 1607, bequeathed many volumes to his fellow translators that revealed the value they placed on the scholarship of Jewish commentators concerning their own Scripture and religious law. These bequests included the works of Maimonides, Nachmanides, David Kimchi, Joseph ben Gorion, and Joseph Karo, among others.[26]

Miles Smith, at the time of the translation a canon at Hereford, joined Rainolds at Corpus Christi to work on the Prophets. His surviving books, housed at the Hereford Cathedral Library, reveal that many of the tools of this biblical translator were in Hebrew: a copy of David Kimchi's *Sefer Michlol,* which was made up of a Hebrew grammar and dictionary printed in Venice by Daniel Bomberg (1545 and 1529, respectively); a second Hebrew dictionary, printed in Basel (1599); Elia Levita's *Lexicon Chaldaicum* printed by Paul Fagius in 1560; and Old Testament Hebrew texts printed by Bomberg and Robert Estienne, with accompanying rabbinic commentaries, including those of Ibn Ezra, Rashi, and Kimchi on the twelve Minor Prophets.[27]

Another translator for whom Kimchi was of crucial importance was Edward Lively, Regius Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge, who headed the First Cambridge Company. The scholars in this group were charged with preparing the translation of the first book of Chronicles through the

Song of Solomon (Song of Songs). Lively, who died in 1605, published an important scholarly work in which he displayed vast knowledge of Jewish and Christian sources. "For points of grammar and vocabulary he refers frequently to David Kimchi's *Liber radicum*. Kimchi himself he refers to as 'doctissimus Hebraeus.' … Lively's procedure in discovering the exact shade of meaning of Hebrew phrases and idioms is worth noting, for it was probably the method adopted by the other [KJV] translators also. He would cite as many passages as he could where the same phrase occurred and, by careful examination and comparison, draw a conclusion."[28]

The impetus for the revival of Hebrew studies in England during the sixteenth century came from humanistic and Protestant circles on the Continent.[29] This knowledge of Hebrew not only allowed these individuals to read the Bible in the original, but it also led them to appreciate the exegetical comments of postbiblical Jewish scholars. This made the contribution of medieval rabbis all the more valuable in solving textual difficulties. Further, in their efforts to maintain a distinct position against the Catholics, Protestants insisted that Hebrew be part of one of the tools at their disposal in doctrinal debates with Roman Catholics. As it turns out, on more than one occasion medieval Jewish commentators supported the Protestant interpretation.

The first recognized teacher of Hebrew in Tudor England was Robert Wakefield, who taught first at Cambridge (in the 1520s) and then at Oxford (beginning in 1530). By the mid-1540s the establishment of Regius Chairs put Hebrew teaching on a sound financial basis at both universities.[30]

By 1600 at least a few schools were providing their senior pupils with the necessary groundwork for further study in the Hebrew language. Thus there were Westminster School and Merchant Taylors' School, where Lancelot Andrewes (who led the first Westminster Company) became proficient in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. Access to Hebrew books accordingly became easier. On the basis of inventories and catalogues, we can judge that by the end of the sixteenth century, Hebrew Bibles, rabbinic commentaries, and related grammars and dictionaries were all on the market.[31]

Christian Hebraism and Sixteenth-Century Translators

The Christian Hebraism exhibited by the KJV translators in the early seventeenth century was, to a large extent, a continuation of developments from the previous century. Thus it is that a survey of English Bible translators of the sixteenth century, starting with William Tyndale, provides the neces-

sary background for a fuller appreciation of the circumstances in which the KJV translators worked. In England it was Tyndale who first took upon himself the task of producing a vernacular translation of the Bible. He tirelessly worked on this project during the period from 1526 to 1534.

Tyndale's version became the basis of later official versions, including the KJV. Although few, if any, critics would question Tyndale's literary ability, there have been many who have doubted that he had the requisite skills in Hebrew to translate directly from the Masoretic Text. Rather, it is argued, he relied (almost) entirely on the Vulgate and Luther's German Bible for his rendering of parts of the Old Testament.

Specialist G. Lloyd Jones puts forth what is in my view a convincing case in favor of Tyndale's knowledge of, indeed skills in, Hebrew. Tyndale's demonstrable acquaintance with earlier translators (especially Jerome and Luther) does not go against his own expertise in Hebrew, since competent-to-accomplished translators often have recourse to earlier versions. After weighing all of the evidence, Jones concludes: "That he [Tyndale] worked from a Hebrew original admits of no doubt, and the fact that he made liberal use of all the aids available to him in translations, grammars and dictionaries, does not detract in any way from his greatness as a biblical scholar."[32]

Miles Coverdale, who admitted that he could not translate the Bible from the original languages, knew no Hebrew and had only slight knowledge of Greek.[33]

Likewise, John Rogers, writing under the name "Thomas Matthew," produced an English-language version of the Bible. "Rogers was essentially an editor. His 'translation' contained little that was original."[34] Nonetheless, Rogers was an accomplished linguist, who did have at least some familiarity with Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew. This information can be gathered primarily on the basis of a careful study of his annotations to the Old Testament. He certainly knew Kimchi, probably only in translation.[35]

Coverdale subsequently produced another version, the Great Bible. His knowledge of Hebrew had not in any way improved, but in this work he did make use of sources, such as Sebastian Münster's Hebrew-Latin version, that acknowledged traditional Jewish interpretations. Through this means, many such distinctively Jewish readings, from Rashi and Kimchi, among others, entered into the tradition of the English Bible.

Coverdale and Rogers, although manifestly lacking the same depth of interest in Hebrew that Tyndale displayed, recognized the importance of the Hebrew language and the value of rabbinic exegesis. With this in mind,

they consciously followed scholars who had direct acquaintance with the works of the rabbis, thereby insuring the inclusion of Jewish renderings in the text of the English Bible.[36]

When Queen Mary I, a Roman Catholic, assumed the throne in 1553, many Protestants left England; a small group eventually settled in Geneva, where study and translation of the Bible were significant activities. In this context, English-speaking Protestants decided to produce a new version for themselves. One of the translators, Anthony Gilby, was known for his Hebrew learning and was the author of commentaries on Micah and Malachi. When he was at Cambridge, Gilby was educated at Christ's College, where he acquired "an exact knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew Languages."[37] In his commentary on Micah, he exhibited considerable ability as a Hebraist, making explicit references to the Hebrew text and discussing the interpretation of individual Hebrew words and phrases.[38]

Another translator, Thomas Sampson, was proficient in linguistics and was a close friend of John Harding, who was at that time a Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, "an association which in all probability contributed to his knowledge of the language."[39] Of Gilby, Sampson, and their fellow translators, we can "confidently assert that they worked directly from the Hebrew text."[40] This can be seen from statements in the preface to the Geneva Bible, as well as in the translation itself, where literal renderings of the Hebrew were sometimes printed in italics along the margins, so as to explain or justify a new translation in the text itself.

Moreover, in Geneva the translators had immediate access to Jewish commentaries, often through Latin translations, made by Christian scholars. Since such scholars characteristically "drew on Jewish exegesis in their search for the plain meaning of the text, it is hardly surprising that echoes of the Hebraic tradition abound in the Geneva Bible."[41]

In response to the popularity of the Geneva Bible, a new English-language version was commissioned in England itself, the Bishops' Bible. Some of those chosen for this task were imbued with Hebrew learning. William Alley, for example, was a contemporary of Anthony Gilby at Cambridge, and there is ample proof of his knowledge of Hebrew and his appreciation of Jewish exegesis, which he acquired primarily, though not exclusively, through the use of Christian intermediaries, most notably Nicholas of Lyra, whom he held in especially high esteem.

Archbishop Matthew Parker, who prompted the project that led to the Bishops' Bible, is listed as the translator for Genesis and Exodus. Although not himself a Hebraist of distinction, Parker was known as a generous

patron to other scholars whose work dealt with the Hebrew language and rabbinic exegesis.[42]

Thus it is that some prominent KJV translators and many of their predecessors in England display an authentic knowledge of and appreciation for the Hebraic tradition, including the text of the Hebrew Bible itself and the extensive writings of the major Jewish biblical exegetes. The presence of such individuals was then not an exception, but an expectation.

Some of these translators could access Hebrew-language material directly and delve deeply into its finer linguistic or theological points. Others worked exclusively through Christian intermediaries who wrote in Latin. In either case, these translators sought "to produce the definitive vernacular version of the Old Testament."[43] From a linguistic as well as a doctrinal perspective, such a version was impossible without knowledge of Biblical Hebrew and postbiblical Jewish exegesis.

On the basis of the extended discussion presented above, there can be no doubt that the KJV exerted a long-lived and far-reaching influence on English-language versions of the Bible for/by Jews. Admittedly, there were and continue to be exceptions, although they are for the most part products of the second half of the twentieth century.

Moreover, it is clear that the KJV is a repository, a vast repository at that, for Jewish exegetical traditions and distinctively Jewish grammatical perspectives (whether theologically motivated or not). This resulted from the fact that many of the KJV translators were themselves Christian Hebraists. In addition, they made generous use of earlier versions by Tyndale and others, many of whom were themselves Christian Hebraists, admittedly of varying merit. Although the translators of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century were not always conscious of their indebtedness to Jewish sources, they did not shy away from such recognition when they were.

All of this helps explain the many circumstances that are characteristic of English-language Bible translations and their appropriation by Jews engaged in the production of English-language versions. Is this set of circumstances unusual? Or perhaps unique? It is to these questions that we now turn.

In Search of Parallels

Neither of the two Jewish versions from antiquity, the Septuagint and the Targums, offers a parallel to the circumstances presented by English-language editions. However, while the Septuagint, as the first translation of

its sort, cannot be viewed as dependent on an earlier Greek rendering, the Targums present a somewhat more mixed picture. Specialists in these Aramaic texts have detected the influence of the Syriac-language Peshitta in some Targums; particularly suggestive in this regard is the Targum to Proverbs.[44] And there is, as I understand it, consensus that the Peshitta for the Old Testament derived from a Christian (or predominantly Christian) context. Nonetheless, this set of circumstances presents at most a distant parallel to the intricate system that links the KJV and English-language versions of the Bible by/for Jews.

Of medieval Jewish translations, none achieved more prominence in its own linguistic, cultural, and geographical environment than the Tafsir of Saadiah Gaon in Arabic. Saadiah intended that his rendering, which privileged the Arabic of his target audience over the Hebrew of his base, serve as the standard for the growing number of Arabic-speaking Jews in his and successive generations. But it is not to his success (or lack thereof) that our attention is drawn at this point, but rather to the degree, if any, to which his translation conforms to an earlier non-Jewish exemplar. While there may have been some efforts at translating the Bible among Christians in Arabic-speaking lands, there is no evidence to suggest that any of these were influential in Saadiah's approach to shaping his Arabic-language Bible. There may well have been some mutual influence between Saadiah, a supporter of rabbinic exegesis, and the Karaites, a Jewish group that opposed rabbinic tradition.[45] But none of this, however interesting in its own right, is directly relevant to the issues at hand.

It would seem that a more promising parallel, if it in fact exists, would be found among European languages, such as Spanish, French, or Italian. But the history of Bible translating, both Christian and Jewish, within these cultures did not support developments that are similar to those in English-speaking lands. Research somewhat farther afield, as is the case with Hungarian and Russian, is no more profitable in this regard. This is particularly intriguing because Jewish communities in all of these societies, with the single exception of Spain, produced vernacular editions of the Bible at approximately the same time their coreligionists were active in Great Britain.[46]

When we turn to German-speaking lands, we must for our purposes dismiss the many Yiddish translations that appeared over an extended period of time. After all, Yiddish as a language was a product internal to the Jewish community; thus it is not possible for its Bibles to be dependent,

even distantly, on biblical renderings in the same language produced by non-Jews.

But circumstances are entirely different when it comes to German-language Bibles. Here there are promising, if albeit only partial, parallels. First, it is in my view appropriate to compare the KJV with the German Bible produced by Martin Luther in the early sixteenth century. Luther produced a landmark German version of the Bible, laboring on the Old Testament from 1522 to 1534. As part of his efforts to reform Christianity, he shaped a German text characterized by forceful language and direct diction. This was a literary masterpiece against which all subsequent Christian versions of the Bibles in German would be measured.

Moreover, Luther's version reflected some elements of the Jewish interpretive tradition—in his case, the medieval exegete Rashi, as refracted through Christian sources (primarily, Nicholas de Lyra), influenced him more than he would probably have been comfortable admitting.[47] This is not the same as the far-reaching and generally conscious efforts made by the KJV translators to incorporate distinctively Jewish exegesis into their text, but it is more or less comparable.

Did Jewish translators into German make use of Luther, as Anglo-Jewish coreligionists did of the KJV? An affirmative response can be offered with respect to the first Jewish translator into German, the Jewish intellectual and Enlightenment leader Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786). Among the many projects he initiated to liberate his fellow Jews was the production of a Bible, through which he sought to remedy what he saw as the deplorably low status of Jewish Bible versions, all in Yiddish, then available to German-speaking Jews. Elite cultural and social circles were at last opening up to them. But how, he asked, could members of his community gain admittance, if they remained unacquainted with the High German style spoken and written by the Christian leadership of his day? Mendelssohn's version of the Bible and the accompanying commentary—the first Jewish translation into the German (rather than Judeo-German [Yiddish]) language—produced by himself and others whom he inspired, served as one of his responses to this situation.[48]

The publication of Mendelssohn's translations of the Bible began with his version of Ecclesiastes in 1770, followed by his Pentateuch (in 1783), Psalms (1785–1791), and Song of Songs (1788). Various scholars collaborated with Mendelssohn on other books while he was alive and continued in his style and with his goals after his death. A complete edition of the

Bible by Mendelssohn and his followers appeared in the mid-1830s. It was often reprinted thereafter.

Mendelssohn accepted much of the language of the by-then classic formulations of Luther, while at the same time excluding all of the specifically Christian renderings Luther had formulated. In support of his Jewish renderings, Mendelssohn marshaled an array of Jewish commentators. Like Saadiah's work, the first editions of Mendelssohn's version, called the *Biur,* were printed in Hebrew characters. In a sense, then, Mendelssohn's self-designated task was as much to increase knowledge among Jews about Judaism as it was to enhance social, cultural, and political opportunities for Jews in the larger world. For these goals, which were to Mendelssohn complementary and mutually reinforcing, a text that sounded very much like Luther's was the indispensable starting point.

We can at least in part feel the intensity of Mendelssohn's dedication to these goals by looking at some of his writings on this topic. Thus he bemoans the fact that since the proliferation of Judeo-German versions, "no-one has taken to heart to emend this perversion and to translate the Holy Torah into the proper and accustomed language generally used in our generation. Jewish children who desire 'to perceive words of understanding' 'run to and fro seeking the word of the Lord' [see Prov 1:2 and Amos 8:12, respectively] from Christian Scholars."[49] This pedagogical interest on Mendelssohn's part is fully in keeping with the origins of his translation: he initially undertook the project to instruct his sons.[50]

Mendelssohn could be harsh in his suggestion that Christian scholars were prone to far-fetched and random emendation of the biblical text, but he ultimately realized that differing methodologies were not the primary distinction between Jewish and Christian translators (and translations) of the Bible. Rather, Jews and Christians read and interpret the Bible in fundamentally different ways:

> I do not censure those scholars for [their critical approaches], for what should compel them to heed the tradition which they did not receive from their forefathers or the Masorah which was not transmitted to them from trustworthy men? They do not accept the words of the Torah to preserve and fulfill all that is written there.[51]

That task, that sacred task, could be undertaken only by Jews:

> For us, the Torah is an inheritance … to know the commandments that God commanded us to learn and teach, to preserve and fulfill, for it is

> our life and length of our days [see Deut 30:20]. In order that our lives not be hanging on the hairbreadth of conjecture or the thread of reflection alone, our Sages decreed for us the Masorah and erected a fence for the Torah and for the commandments, for decrees and laws, in order that we not grope like the blind in the dark [for this image see Isa 59:10]. … We do not live from the mouth [of … an emender], but from that which our trustworthy masters of the Masorah transmitted to us.[52]

We can easily imagine similar sentiments, and similar words (albeit in English), from almost any of the Jewish translators we looked at in England and the United States. Nonetheless, from its inception Mendelssohn's work was controversial within the Jewish community. Many of its leaders feared that their students, once introduced to High German through Mendelssohn's rendering, would abandon the Jewish texts that they had traditionally studied in favor of works that formed part of the German literary canon. Although we have no way of gauging the validity of such concerns in general, it is the case that almost all of Mendelssohn's direct descendants became Christians within two generations.

Moses Mendelssohn served as a role model for later Jewish translators in other languages, especially Max L. Margolis, who (as we saw above) was editor-in-chief of the Jewish Publication Society translation that appeared in 1917. In addition to sharing Mendelssohn's conviction that only Jews could produce a Bible translation fully appropriate for Jews, Margolis also made use of an elevated form of the target language (in his case, English) to ease the passage of his fellow Jews from the status of outsiders to the position of those who could fully partake of what their respective societies offered.

The controversies that surrounded Mendelssohn continued to resonate within the world of German-speaking Jews even as successive editions of Mendelssohn's translation, printed with German characters, continued to attract notice in a growing market that became increasingly diverse with the rise of Reform and Neo-Orthodox communities among German-speaking Jews. But Mendelssohn's German translation did not dominate the market for German-speaking Jews nor did nineteenth- or early-twentieth-century Jewish translators adopt the stylistic and other characteristics of Mendelssohn's version that clearly distinguished it as a (admittedly Jewish) successor to Luther. Thus, for example, by the year 1900 only a minority of German Jews made habitual use of a Luther-sounding Bible. In England and the United States, by contrast, the sounds of the KJV, judaized to varying degrees, resonated in schools, homes, and synagogues.

Conclusion

In a sense, I suppose, from the very beginning of this paper I have stacked the deck, so to speak, in favor of positive responses to the questions we raised. After all, it is not possible, or at least not probable, that cultural, political, historical, and religious circumstances will all replicate themselves in different societies. Given the differences, greater or smaller, in such contexts, it is not all that surprising (or not surprising at all) that developments, such as Bible translations, will differ from culture to culture.

In sum, then, what is of greater interest is the interplay of Bible translations (or perhaps better, Bible translators) with the multiple contexts in which such projects develop and evolve. Religious communities, no less so than any other type of communities, are not static. They respond to all sorts of external stimuli and are equally subject to internal factors. When seen in this light, the Jewish reactions to the KJV were not only unique within the larger (non-English-speaking) Jewish world, but also within the larger (non-Jewish) English-speaking world. Even if we accept such uniqueness as inevitable, it is nonetheless the case that the nature of this uniqueness cannot be taken for granted. Its contours can be revealed only through the sort of analysis presented in this study.

Notes

1. This study will appear in ch. 6 of Leonard J. Greenspoon, *A History of Jewish Bible Translations* (forthcoming).

2. In addition to other publications listed below, see Leonard J. Greenspoon, "Jewish Translations of the Bible," in *The Jewish Study Bible* (ed. Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler; New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 2005–20; idem, "Versions, Jewish," *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (ed. Katharine Doob Sakenfeld; 5 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon, 2006–2009), 5:760–65.

3. On these pamphlets in particular and on Anglo-Jewish Bible translation in general, see Leonard J. Greenspoon, "The King James Bible and Jewish Bible Translations," in *Translation That Openeth the Window: Reflections on the History and Legacy of the King James Bible* (ed. David G. Burke; Society of Biblical Literature Biblical Scholarship in North America 23; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 123–38.

4. Raphael Loewe, "Review of A. S. Herbert, *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of the English Bible 1525–1961*," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 21 (1970): 88–89. For the translation of Moses Mendelssohn, see Abigail E. Gilman, "Between Religion and Culture: Mendelssohn, Buber, Rosenzweig and the Enterprise of Biblical Translation," in *Biblical Translation in Context* (ed. Frederick W. Knobloch; Bethesda: University of Maryland Press, 2002), 93–114; and Leonard J. Greenspoon, "Jewish Bible Translation in/and the Enlightenment," *Studia Hebraica* 2 (2003): 319–28.

5. See also Leonard J. Greenspoon, "The Birth of a Bible," *Norii* 10 (2002). Online: http://www.revistanorii.com/10/Leonard_Greenspoon_The_Birth_of_a_Bible.html.

6. See further Leonard J. Greenspoon, "Bringing Home the Gospel: Yiddish Bibles, Bible Societies, and the Jews," in *Yiddish Language and Culture: Then and Now* (ed. Leonard J. Greenspoon; Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Symposium of the Philip M. and Ethel Klutznick Chair in Jewish Civilization, October 27 and 28, 1996; Studies in Jewish Civilization 9; Omaha: Creighton University Press, 1998), 291–304.

7. See Leonard J. Greenspoon, "It's All Greek to Me: Septuagint Studies Since 1968," *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 5 (1997): 147–74; and, more recently, idem, "At the Beginning: The Septuagint as a Jewish Bible Translation," in *"Translation Is Required": The Septuagint in Retrospect and Prospect* (ed. Robert J. V. Hiebert; Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies 56; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 159–69.

8. On David Levi see Goodman Lipkind, "Levi, David," *Jewish Encyclopedia* (ed. Isidore Singer; rev. ed.; 12 vols.; New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1925), 8:25–26; and Jacob Rothschild, "Levi, David," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (ed. Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder; 16 vols.; Jerusalem: Keter, 1971–1972), 11:78–79. Several other versions from this period are edited by members of the Alexander family. Of Levy Alexander, it is written: "[His] translations were slovenly pieces of work, displaying ignorance alike of English and Hebrew. Levy seems to have been of a somewhat quarrelsome disposition. … Levy continued his abuse of the chief rabbi on the fly-leaves of the separate fascicles of his translation of the Bible" (Joseph Jacobs, "Alexander," *Jewish Encyclopedia* 1:348; see also Cecil Roth, "Alexander," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 2:571–72).

9. On this see Loewe, "Review," 88.

10. On this last point see Leonard J. Greenspoon, "Top Dollar, Bottom Line? Marketing English-Language Bibles within the Jewish Community," in *Biblical Translation in Context* (ed. Frederick W. Knobloch; Studies and Texts in Jewish History and Culture; Bethesda: University of Maryland Press, 2002), 115–33.

11. For more information on Newman and his career, see Goodman Lipkind, "Newman, Selig," *Jewish Encyclopedia* 9:294.

12. Selig Newman, *Specimen of a New Version of the Hebrew Bible …* (London: B. Wertheim, 1839), iv.

13. Joseph H. Hertz, ed., *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs* (2nd ed.; London: Soncino, 1961), 217–18. See also Leonard J. Greenspoon, "The Portion: The Politics of Biblical Translation," *The Forward* (January 30, 2004).

14. Joseph H. Hertz, "Jewish Translations of the Bible in English [being the concluding lecture in series, 'Translations of the Bible,' Toynbee Hall, 1919]," in *Addresses* (vol. 2 of *Sermons, Addresses and Studies;* 3 vols.; London: Soncino, 1938), 70–93.

15. For biographical sketches of these individuals, among others, see the relevant entries in the *Jewish Encyclopedia.*

16. Mary Wilson Carpenter, *Imperial Bibles, Domestic Bodies: Women, Sexuality, and Religion in the Victorian Market* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2003). Alas, no mention is made in this work of Friedlander's or Benisch's versions. See Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, "The KJV and Women: Soundings and Suggestions," 87–102, in this volume.

17. Hertz, "Jewish Translations," 85.

18. On this see further Greenspoon, "Jewish Translations of the Bible."

19. As quoted in Hertz, "Jewish Translations," 81.

20. On this and related developments see Jonathan D. Sarna, *JPS: The Americanization of Jewish Culture 1888–1988* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1989), esp. 97–116.

21. Leonard J. Greenspoon, *Max Leopold Margolis: A Scholar's Scholar* (Society of Biblical Literature Biblical Scholarship in North America 15; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 55–75 (ch. 3: "Bible Translation"); idem, "Biblical Translators in Antiquity and in the Modern World: A Comparative Study," *Hebrew University College Annual* 60 (1989): 91–113.

22. Greenspoon, *Max Leopold Margolis,* 69.

23. Gareth Lloyd Jones, Helen Moore, and Julian Reid, "Materials and Methods," in *Manifold Greatness: The Making of the King James Bible* (ed. Helen Moore and Julian Reid; Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2011), 94.

24. David Daiches, *The King James Version of the English Bible; an Account of the Development and Sources of the English Bible of 1611 with Special Reference to the Hebrew Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), esp. 182–218.

25. Ibid., 159.

26. Jones et al., "Materials and Methods," 99–100.

27. Ibid., 100.

28. Daiches, *King James Version*, 153.

29. Jones et al., "Materials and Methods," 94.

30. Ibid., 95

31. Ibid., 93–96.

32. Ibid., 122.

33. Ibid., 123.

34. Ibid., 124.

35. Ibid., 125.

36. Ibid., 125–27.

37. Ibid., 129.

38. Ibid., 129–30.

39. Ibid., 129.

40. Ibid., 130.

41. Ibid., 131.

42. Ibid., 139.

43. Ibid., 140.

44. For a full and up-to-date study of the Targums, see Paul V. M. Flesher and Bruce Chilton, *The Targums: A Critical Introduction* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2011).

45. On this see most recently Meira Polliack, *The Karaite Tradition of Arabic Bible Translation: A Linguistic and Exegetical Study of Karaite Translations of the Pentateuch from the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries C.E.* (Études sur le Judäisme Médiéval 17; Leiden: Brill, 1997).

46. On Jewish translations into these languages, as well as others, see the relevant

entries in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (ed. Fred Skolnik; 2nd ed.; 22 vols.; Jerusalem: Keter, 2007); see also ch. 5 in Greenspoon, *History of Jewish Bible Translations*.

47. On this and related issues see Thomas Plassmann, "Nicholas of Lyra," *Catholic Encyclopedia* (ed. Charles G. Herbermann; 16 vols.; New York: Encyclopedia Press, 1913–1914), 11:63; and Gotthold Weil, "Lyra, Nicolas de," *Jewish Encyclopedia* 8:231–32. This influence is the subject of a well-attested verse: *Si Lyra non lyrasset, Lutherus non saltasset*.

48. For this and related matters, see Gilman, "Religion and Culture"; and Greenspoon, "Jewish Bible Translation in/and the Enlightenment."

49. Edward Breuer, *The Limits of Enlightenment: Jews, Germans, and the Eighteenth-Century Study of Scripture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 158.

50. David Sorkin, *Moses Mendelssohn and the Religious Enlightenment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 53.

51. Quoted in Breuer, *Limits of Enlightenment,* 160.

52. Ibid., 161.

The Influence of the KJV in Protestant Chinese Bible Translation Work

Kuo-Wei Peng

The history of Protestant Chinese Bible translation is a long and complex one,[1] and therefore the role of the KJV in Protestant Chinese Bible translation needs to be discussed stage by stage. The first stage begins with the translation work of the first Protestant missionaries; the second stage begins with the first (ultimately unsuccessful) attempt at a Chinese Union Version; the third stage is an era of a plethora of Chinese Bible translations; and the last stage I wish to discuss starts with the translation process that led to the completion of a Union Version.

The Beginning of Protestant Chinese Bible Translation (1810s–1840s)

Robert Morrison (1782–1834) was sent by the London Mission Society (LMS) and is usually cited as the first Protestant missionary to China.[2] He sailed to China in 1807 with the assignment to translate the Bible into Chinese.[3] He completed the New Testament by himself in 1813, and with help from William Milne (1785–1822) he completed the Old Testament in 1818.[4] The whole Bible was finally published in 1823.[5]

Although Morrison did use Greek and Hebrew texts to some extent, he used the KJV as his model text with the help of other versions.[6] Due to the challenge of finding proper Chinese vocabulary, phrasing, and style, in translation he relied more on the unpublished Chinese New Testament manuscript translated by the Catholic missionary Jean Basset (ca. 1662–1707) and probably the unpublished Chinese Bible (incomplete) done by the Jesuit Louis de Poirot (1735–1813) as well as other Roman Catholic

Chinese works.[7] As a result, those Catholic sources, which in turn were based on the Latin Vulgate, influenced strongly his translation.[8]

Although Morrison produced the first Protestant Chinese Bible on Chinese soil, it was Joshua Marshman (1768–1837) from the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) and Joannes Lassar (1781–?) who published the first Protestant Chinese Bible in Serampore, India, in 1822, one year before the appearance of Morrison's version.[9] Lassar produced the first draft "from the English" (at that time the only possibility was to refer to the KJV) "assisted by his knowledge of the Armenian," and sometimes Marshman checked the work with Griesbach's critical edition of the Greek text.[10] It turned out that Morrison's and Marshman's translations bore a great degree of similarity to each other and both to the Basset manuscript; this phenomenon eventually caused them to accuse each other of plagiarism.[11]

Very soon Morrison's and Marshman's translations proved that they both were in need of improvement; and under the leadership of Walter Henry Medhurst (1796–1857), who was Morrison's chosen successor, the revision of Morrison's New Testament started in 1835.[12] From the sources available to me, it is unclear about the base text and model text(s) used by Medhurst and his international committee.[13] For our discussion, however, this lack of information may not be crucial because Medhurst, being aware that Chinese was linguistically very different from the Indo-European languages as well as from the Semitic languages, was concerned more with the understandability of the target text through the proper choices of style, ways of expression, and phrases than with the reproduction of the exact content of the base text or the imitation of a certain model text.[14] Unfortunately, his innovative approach was characterized as paraphrasing and became one of the major reasons for its rejection by the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS).[15] This eventually led to his retirement from the committee and left his colleague Gützlaff to complete the Old Testament on his own.[16] Despite the rejection by the BFBS, the New Testament immensely influenced later Chinese translations in the area of terminology,[17] and the full Bible done by Gützlaff also became influential because it was later adopted (with revision) by the Taiping rebels.[18]

The First Attempt at a Union Version (1840s–1860s)

The Treaty of Nanking (Nanjing) in 1842 resulted in the opening of five trading ports in China and the British annexation of Hong Kong. It also allowed missionary activities to expand from Macao, Canton, to these

newly opened ports. This new opportunity generated the need for a translation of the Bible that would be accepted by not only the mission societies but also the Chinese. In 1843 at a conference held in Hong Kong a committee of fifteen people was formed for a commonly translated Chinese Bible; Medhurst was elected as the chairperson, and the committee members included his former colleague Bridgman as well as James Legge (1815–1897), one of the best Sinologists of that time.[19] The translation principles required the translation to be in conformity with the Hebrew and Greek in sense.[20] It was also decided to use the Textus Receptus as the base text for the translation of the New Testament, and this choice was in deference to the wishes of the BFBS, even though the translators would have preferred to follow the critical edition done by S. T. Bloomfield.[21] This is the first time in the history of Protestant Chinese Bible translation that a base text was officially determined and clearly indicated; the decision not to use a scholarly critical edition as the base text can only be explained as being influenced by the prestigious status of the KJV, whose New Testament was based on the Textus Receptus. This New Testament later was known as the Delegates' Version (DV) or the Delegates' Version New Testament.

Before the second general committee meeting in 1847, the project suffered its first split: all Baptist missionaries but one withdrew to work on a Baptist project.[22] The different opinions on the translation of "baptism" in Chinese could trace back to the time of Morrison and Marshman, and this difference always gave the Baptist missionaries a different expectation in the joint project.[23] Being the chairperson of the general committee, Medhurst influenced the rest of the committee to employ his approach to translation; that is, to achieve readability, priority should be given to the sense (or even interpreted adjustment), not to the letter.[24] His domination on this matter sowed the seed for a second split. In 1850 the tension between Medhurst and his British colleagues on one side and Bridgman and his American colleagues on the other finally turned to a conflict when they discussed the style to be used for the Old Testament; the result was the departure of Medhurst and his British colleagues from the project.[25] Eventually, Medhurst and his LMS colleagues completed the translation of an Old Testament[26] in 1854, and it was praised for its literary quality but criticized for its lack of accuracy.[27]

After the departure of the British missionaries, some of the remaining American missionaries also left the team for different reasons; as a result, only Bridgman and Michael S. Culbertson (1819–1862) were left to continue the work.[28] Bridgman and Culbertson revised the New Testament

and published their own in 1859; they followed up with an Old Testament in 1863. The translation done by them, though more faithful to the original and in circulation for a long time, never experienced the same high esteem that the translation done by their British counterpart enjoyed.[29]

The Baptist missionaries also yielded their own translations. On the American side, Josiah Goddard (1813–1854) and William Dean (1807–1895) published their New Testament in 1853, and it was later revised by Edward Clemens Lord (1817–1887) and published in 1872; as for the Old Testament, it was completed by Dean and published in 1868.[30] On the British side, Thomas Hall Hudson (1800–1876) translated a complete New Testament, which was published in 1867.[31] These Baptist versions, nevertheless, were far less influential than the New Testament and the Old Testament done by Medhurst and his LMS colleagues, even though Goddard's and Lord's works were praised for maintaining a better balance between readability and faithfulness than the DV New Testament and the LMV Old Testament do.[32]

Among these projects, the DV New Testament attained greater success than others due to its elegant Chinese style; and because of this elegant style some Chinese authors even go so far as to compare this version to the canonical books of Chinese classical literature.[33] It was also the version selected for a royal dedication at the Chinese court in 1894 and again in 1911.[34] Since the DV New Testament was translated on the basis of the Textus Receptus, it exhibits some characteristics of the KJV. The DV New Testament contains the verses that exist in the KJV but are normally omitted in the modern critical Greek text: Matt 17:21; 18:11; 23:14; Mark 7:16; 9:44, 46; 11:26; 15:28; Luke 17:36 (with a textual note); 23:17; John 5:4; Acts 8:37; 15:34; 24:7; 28:29 (with an explanatory note); and Rom 16:24.[35] The ending of its Lord's Prayer in Matthew contains the doxology (Matt 6:13); in 1 John 5:7–8 there is the Johannine Comma or "Trinity passage"; and neither the account of the woman caught in adultery (John 7:53–8:11) nor the ending of Mark (16:9–20) comes with a textual marking or note to indicate they are not found in the earliest manuscripts. With these examples, the influence of the KJV on the DV New Testament can be clearly seen.

An Era of a Plethora of Chinese Bible Translation (1860s–1890s)

Despite their relative success, the DV New Testament and the LMV Old Testament did not achieve their original goal to provide a cooperatively

translated Chinese Bible for the missionaries and the Chinese. On the contrary, this project marked the beginning of an era of a plethora of Chinese Bible translations. This influx of productivity was not caused merely by the conflicts between mission societies, though. It was also an outcome of the discovery of other possible styles to be used for Chinese Bible translation.

From Morrison and Marshman to the DV, the Chinese style used was basically a classical style that the intellectuals were familiar with but the general public would find difficult to understand. Only after the Treaty of Tianjin (1858) and the Convention of Peking (Beijing; 1860) did missionaries have the opportunity to settle in the interior of China and appreciate the potential of Mandarin as a literary style for Chinese Bible translation.[36] Mandarin could be considered a lingua franca for the northern provinces in China at that time, but it was not the dialect widely used in the south.[37] To reach a wider readership in the south, a solution proposed was to use a form and level of language that fell between the literary language of the DV and Mandarin, and it was called Easy Wenli (淺文理), which denoted a lower classical form in comparison with the classical form, Wenli, used in the DV.[38]

Several attempts were made in using Mandarin or Easy Wenli to translate the Bible into Chinese;[39] for our discussion, two representative figures of this period deserve attention: Samuel Isaac Joseph Schereschewsky (1831–1906) of the American Episcopal Church Mission, and Griffith John (1831–1912) of the LMS. They both engaged in Mandarin Chinese Bible translation as well as Easy Wenli Chinese Bible translation. Schereschewsky started as a team member of the Mandarin Peking Version New Testament (published in 1866),[40] later single-handedly translated his Mandarin Old Testament (published in 1875)[41] as a companion of the Peking Version New Testament, and again single-handedly translated his Easy Wenli Bible (published in 1902).[42] John was the first missionary to translate the Chinese Bible in Easy Wenli (NT published in 1885 and incomplete OT published in 1905)[43] and later adapted his lower classical version into Mandarin (NT, Genesis, and Exodus published in 1889).[44]

For the translation of the New Testament, both Schereschewsky and John preferred the Textus Receptus to the critical Greek texts available at that time as the base text even after the New Testament of the English Revised Version (RV), whose base text differed from the Textus Receptus, was published in 1881.[45] In practice, John might have used both the Textus Receptus and the revised Greek text,[46] but Schereschewsky clearly followed the KJV/Textus Receptus tradition more strictly. In the New

Testament of his lower classical version,[47] Schereschewsky retained in the main text Matt 17:21; 18:11; 23:14 (with a textual note); Mark 7:16; 9:44, 46; 11:26; 15:28 (with a textual note); Luke 17:36; 23:17; John 5:4; Acts 8:37; 15:34; 24:7; 28:29 (with a textual note); and Rom 16:24. He also retained the doxology at the end of the Lord's Prayer in Matt 6:13 (but with a textual note), the "Trinity passage" in 1 John 5:7–8 (but with a textual note). He also did not use any marker to indicate the textual issues for the account of the woman caught in adultery (John 7:53–8:11), nor for the ending of the Gospel of Mark (Mark 16:9–20). It is interesting to note, however, that for Matt 6:13 he inserted an exegetical note to indicate that "deliver us from evil" (拯我於惡; in line with the rendering used in the KJV) could also be rendered as "deliver us from the evil one" (拯我於惡者; in line with the rendering used in the RV NT). Although Schereschewsky's translations followed the KJV faithfully, the textual and exegetical notes he supplied reveal that he was not unaware of the advance of the textual studies of the Greek text of his time.

The Translation of the Union Version and the Advent of a Chinese "Authorized Version" (1890s–1910s)

The 1890 meeting in Shanghai of the General Conference of the Protestant Missionaries of China marked the beginning of the second attempt at a Union Version (UV).[48] Because three Chinese styles—the classical (Wenli), the lower classical (Easy Wenli), and Mandarin—had been used to cater to different readerships, the decision was to have "One Bible in Three Versions" by way of three separate translation committees to work respectively on a classical UV, a lower classical UV, and a Mandarin UV.[49] Both John and Schereschewsky were invited to join the committees because of their experiences and achievements in Chinese Bible translation, but they both declined. For John, one major reason for declining had to do with the committees' decision to use the Greek text behind the RV New Testament as the base text for the translation of the New Testament.[50] The decision not to use the Textus Receptus as the base text in addition to the inability to secure the involvement of these two strong proponents of the KJV and the Textus Receptus made it seem likely that the UV would mark the end of the influence of the KJV in Protestant Bible translation. However, this was not to be the case.

Before the third general missionary conference held in Shanghai in 1907, the three committees had all completed their New Testament trans-

lations; but during the conference it was resolved to combine the two classical UV New Testament editions and to translate only one classical UV Old Testament.[51] Eventually, both the classical UV and the Mandarin UV were published in 1919, and a revised classical UV New Testament was also published with the classical UV Old Testament in 1923.[52] Although these two Chinese Bibles were supposed to be two realizations of the same translation principles and the same base texts, the reality was far from that. The committees were aware of the difference in their interpretations of the translation principles.[53] A closer comparison between the two versions also reveals the differences in their use of the Greek base text.

Zetzsche has pointed out that the Mandarin UV New Testament did not follow strictly the Greek text behind the RV New Testament.[54] For the three passages that he cited as the examples of the influence of the KJV on the Mandarin UV New Testament (Matt 6:13; 17:20; Mark 11:26),[55] the classical UV New Testament puts the doxology of Matt 6:13 in the note, not in the main text,[56] and omits the portions of KJV's Matt 17:21 as well as KJV's Mark 11:26 (but both come with an adjustment of versification). Actually, for the New Testament verses that RV omits (Matt 17:21; 18:11; 23:14; Mark 7:16; 9:44, 46; 11:26; 15:28; Luke 17:36; 23:17: John 5:4; Acts 8:37; 15:34; 24:7; 28:29; Rom 16:24), the Mandarin UV retains Matt 17:21; Mark 9:44, 46; and 11:26, whereas the classical UV omits them all but changes its versification to avoid missing verses in the text. For the Lord's Prayer in Matthew, not only does the Mandarin UV retain the doxology, but also its rendering of the second phrase of Matt 6:13 (救我們脫離凶惡) follows the exegesis of the KJV: "deliver us from evil" (however, it also supplies a note in line with the exegesis of the RV NT: "deliver us from the evil one"). It is interesting to note that for this particular case the classical UV also renders as "evil" (惡), not "the evil one" (惡者), but without an exegetical note. This may be explained by the consideration of keeping the parallelism with the previous phrase (勿導入試、拯我出惡), which is a requirement of Chinese poetry. As for 1 John 5:7–8, neither the classical UV nor the Mandarin UV follows the Textus Receptus, and this seems to be understandable because of the very weak support for the reading of the Textus Receptus.[57] For Mark 16:9–20 and John 7:53–8:11, neither supplies textual markings or textual notes, but the RV also only marks John 7:52–8:11 with square brackets and does not mark Mark 16:9–20 in the same way (although both come with a textual side note).

The year the UV was published (1919) was also the year of the "May Fourth Movement" (五四運動), which coincided with and was closely

associated with the "New Culture Movement" (新文化運動; 1915–1923 or 1917–1921), in which Mandarin (normally seen as the oral form of the language at that time) was promoted to replace the classical style used in the classical UV (normally the written form for the educated people at that time) as the written form for modern Chinese literature. The latter movement brought an irreversible change to the way that Chinese literature is written up to the present day. The effect could also be seen from the sales of the two UV translations: by ten years after the publication of the UV, more than a million copies of the Mandarin New Testament had been sold and half a million complete Mandarin Bibles had been issued; while in 1939, twenty years after the publication of the UV, not a single copy of the classical UV was printed.[58] Since then, the Mandarin UV has become the only Protestant Chinese Bible, going on to achieve a very high status among the Protestant Chinese Christians comparable to that of the KJV among the Protestant Christians who speak English.[59] As a result, the influence of the KJV on the Mandarin UV exemplified by the passages that we discussed continues to influence Protestant Chinese Christians even today. When people cite the Lord's Prayer in the Protestant Chinese churches, it always comes with the doxology.[60] Even for the newly revised UV (the Revised Chinese Union Version; 和合本修訂版; NT published in 2006 and the Bible in 2010), the doxology is still in the main text without a responsible scholarly note despite the strong voices from the Bible Societies' internal reviewers during the revision.[61] With this particular case in the Revised Chinese Union Version alone, the influence of the KJV will continue in the Protestant Chinese churches for years to come.

Conclusion

There are good reasons to argue that the KJV should not leave detectable influences in Protestant Chinese Bible translation work. First, from a linguistic perspective, Chinese is a language very different from the Indo-European language group to which English belongs; and second, from the very beginning Protestant Chinese Bible translations were done, or at least claimed to be done, by using the original texts as the base texts, and these early versions were also strongly influenced by the Roman Catholic sources. During this early stage, the KJV was at most a "given" among many other resources that the translators could resort to.

The situation changed when the Textus Receptus, which was behind the KJV New Testament, was designated as the base text for the DV New

Testament. The decision reflected the prestigious status of the KJV among the English-speaking people, among whom were the supporters of the BFBS, the people that the BFBS served, as well as the British and American missionaries. The status of the KJV later also influenced Schereschewsky's and John's translation work and to a considerable degree accounted for John's decision not to join the UV project.

Even with the decision to use the Greek text behind the RV New Testament as the base text for the translation of the UV New Testament, the influence of the KJV could still be seen clearly in the Mandarin edition of the UV, as our examples show. And when the Mandarin UV gradually became the "Authorized Version" for Protestant Chinese Christians, the legacy of the KJV eventually influenced the revision of the UV. In such a way, the legacy of the KJV will continue for years to come among the Protestant Chinese churches.

Notes

1. In this essay I base the discussion of the history of Protestant Bible translation mainly upon two publications: Weiben Zhao, 譯經溯源 (Tracing Bible Translation) (Hong Kong: China Graduate School of Theology, 1993) (hereafter cited as *Tracing*); and Jost Oliver Zetzsche, *The Bible in China* (Monumenta Serica Monograph Series 45; Nettetal: Steyler, 1999).

2. There is a record indicating that Joshua Marshman could have reached northern China in 1799, i.e., eight years before Morrison's arrival, but other sources show that Marshman reached Serampore of India in the same year. See Zhao, *Tracing*, 17 and nn. 72 and 73.

3. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 32; Zhao, *Tracing*, 16.

4. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 36, 43 n. 95.

5. Ibid., 43.

6. Ibid., 38–39.

7. Ibid., 35–37, also 27–29.

8. Ibid., 51; Zhao, *Tracing*, 18.

9. Zhao, *Tracing*, 17–18; Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 45ff.

10. Quotation from Marshman's letter to the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) in Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 46–47.

11. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 49–51; see also Zhao, *Tracing*, 16.

12. Zhao, *Tracing*, 18; Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 59.

13. The other team members were Robert Morrison's son John Robert Morrison (1814–1844), Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff (1803–1851) from Prussia, and the first American missionary to China, Elijah Coleman Bridgman (1801–1861). See Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 43, 60–61; Zhao, *Tracing*, 18–19.

14. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 64.

15. Ibid., 65–66.

16. Ibid., 68.

17. Ibid., 66–67.

18. Ibid., 72–74. For a detailed account of the Taiping Rebellion in English, see Jonathan Spence, *God's Chinese Son: The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of Hong Xiuquan* (London: HarperCollins, 1996).

19. Zhao, *Tracing*, 20; Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 77–78.

20. Zhao, *Tracing*, 20; Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 79.

21. Zhao, *Tracing*, 20; see esp. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 78 n. 10.

22. Zhao, *Tracing*, 20; Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 81.

23. See Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 54–56, 111.

24. See examples in ibid., 95.

25. Ibid., 97–100. However, Zhao sees it as the departure of Bridgman from the project (*Tracing*, 21). On this complex issue, see further discussion in Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 100–101.

26. Zhao refers to it as the Delegates' Version Old Testament, but probably a more accurate name for it should be the "Ex-delegates' Version" or, more appropriately, the London Mission Version Old Testament (LMV OT). See Zhao, *Tracing*, 20–21; Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 101.

27. Zhao, *Tracing*, 20; Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 102–3.

28. Zetzsche, *Bible in China,* 104–5.

29. Zhao, *Tracing*, 21; Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 104–7.

30. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 113–18; Zhao, *Tracing*, 22.

31. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 120–21.

32. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 118–20, 122; Zhao, *Tracing*, 22.

33. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 103; Zhao, *Tracing*, 21.

34. The dedication in 1894 was for the sixtieth birthday of the empress dowager Cixi (慈禧; 1835–1908). One of the four original copies, all of which use silver plates as covers, now can be seen in the American Bible Society Library's rare Bible collection. See Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 103 n. 118.

35. The comparison is with *UBS Greek New Testament* (ed. Barbara Aland et al.; 4th ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993).

36. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 139–41.

37. Today Mandarin is also spoken in the south of China due to the compulsory education enforced in China during the last several decades.

38. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 161; Zhao, *Tracing*, 22; on the term *Wenli* see Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 161 n. 3.

39. Zhao, *Tracing*, 22–25; also Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, chs. 7 and 8.

40. Zhao, *Tracing*, 24; see also Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 145ff.

41. Zhao, *Tracing*, 25; see also Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 151ff.

42. Zhao, *Tracing*, 23–24; see also Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 178ff.

43. Zhao, *Tracing*, 22–23; see also Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 163ff.

44. Zhao, *Tracing*, 25; see also Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 170ff.

45. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 167, 180.

46. Ibid., 168.

47. On the use of the KJV in his Mandarin Version, see Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 152.

48. Zhao, *Tracing*, 32–33.

49. Zhao, *Tracing*, 23; Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 197–203.

50. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 206–9, 216, 225.

51. For the reasons see ibid., 285–88.

52. Ibid., 306–7, 328.

53. See, e.g., ibid., 232.

54. See examples in ibid., 276–78.

55. See ibid., 278.

56. Upon my request, Mr. Mak, Kam Wah, a Ph.D. research student at Cambridge University, located in the BFBS archive a record of the textual committee (the first committee mentioned in Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 224) on the textual decision for Matt 6:13. According to Mak, only Thomas Bramfitt (1850–1923) expressed that the base text should be followed (i.e., to omit the doxology), while the other two, Martin Schaub (1850–1900) and R. H. Graves (1833–1912), did not express their support or opposition. As a result, we still do not know the exact reason why the Mandarin UV retains the doxology in Matt 6:13. Mak suspects that the Mandarin translation team kept the doxology for the reason of tradition, especially in view that there was no decisive conclusion on this from the textual committee. Mak, Kam Wah, e-mail to author, 4 Jan. 2010.

57. See, e.g., Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (3rd ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 63, 101–2; Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament* (trans. Erroll F. Rhodes; 2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 311. According to Mak, the note of the UV textual committee has been missing from the BFBS archive. As a result, we can only guess the possible reason for its omission from both UV editions. Mak, Kam Wah, e–mail to author, 4 Jan. 2010.

58. Zetzsche, *Bible in China*, 331.

59. A good study can be seen in Yau-yuk Chong, 基督教聖經中文譯本權威現象研究 (A Study of the Phenomenon of Authoritativeness in the Chinese Translations of the Protestant Bible) (Hong Kong: International Bible Society [H.K.], 2000).

60. However, it is not the case for the Catholic Chinese Church because in their Bible, the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Version (思高聖經), this part is not in the main text.

61. I was one of the internal reviewers who advocated putting this part in the note or at least expressing clearly in a note that this doxology does not exist in the oldest manuscripts.

The Monarchs and the Message: Reflections on Bible Translation from the Sixteenth to the Twenty-First Century

N. T. Wright

Introduction: Translation as Part of Biblical Faith

The phrase "lost in translation" is such a cliché that it even became the title of a movie. There is a famous story about a missionary starting a sermon by quoting Jesus' words, "I am the good shepherd," only to have the local interpreter tell the congregation, "He says he is a good man, and keeps goats."

But things get lost just as effectively when, instead of translating, we stick with a foreign or ancient language that readers or hearers do not understand. This is so whether we are talking about the Bible or Shakespeare, about Schubert's songs or Wagner's operas. We want to get the force of the original, but we want to understand it as well. To translate is to distort, but not to translate can be a greater distortion still—especially when part of the point of the text is to communicate meaning, not just to produce melodious noise.

Opera-goers often have the luxury of surtitles, so that while the original words are sung on stage the translation can appear on a screen above. Despite the popularity of overhead projectors in church, I have not heard anyone suggesting that we should read the Bible out loud in its original Hebrew and Greek, with a modern English translation above. The reason we do not do that, I think, is not just the lack of competent people to read the original languages out loud. The reason is that *we believe in translation.* Putting the message *of* Jesus, and the message *about* Jesus, into different languages so that people can understand it in their own idiom is one of the things Christians characteristically do. The problems that this poses—the danger of things being "lost in translation"—have been faced and sur-

mounted again and again. When the church has refused to translate, for instance in the long Middle Ages when the Western church had the Bible in an ancient Latin that few could understand, the ordinary people were at the mercy of whichever priest was claiming to interpret it. Now, happily, more or less all churches recognize the glorious duty of getting the Bible to people in their own tongue. One of the delights of being an Observer at the Synod of Bishops in Rome in late 2008, quite apart from the interesting contrast with our own dear Lambeth Conference a few months before, was the appeal from all round the hall for every man, woman, and child across the Catholic world to have the Bible in their own mother tongue. If only they had said that in 1525, I thought, the entire history of the Western world would have been very different.

That imperative to translate is, I take it, one of the powerful meanings that emerges from the story of Pentecost in Acts. When the Spirit comes, the followers of Jesus are able to tell people about God's powerful deeds *in their own languages*. Christianity has been a translating faith from the outset.

Jesus' first followers were in any case already almost certainly bilingual. Their mother tongue was Aramaic (a language that developed from the Classical Hebrew of the Scriptures, a few hundred years earlier). But Greek had been everybody's second language in their part of the world for three hundred years by their day, and it is quite likely that many "ordinary people" in the Middle East had a smattering of other languages as well. The question of how well Jesus himself could speak Greek—as, for instance, in his reported conversation with Pontius Pilate—remains largely unaddressed, and people can still write books as though Jesus was a monolingual Aramaic speaker.

That is highly unlikely. Bilinguality has historically been the norm in many parts of the world. Those of us who grew up with only one language, and have had to learn others at a later age, are the impoverished exceptions, and I suspect we often project our imagination onto other times and cultures. The little boy selling postcards outside the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem can not only speak Arabic and Hebrew but can also most likely get by in English, French, German, and Spanish; why should Jesus not have been able to speak and read Aramaic and Hebrew and also to speak Greek? Only a monolingual world such as ours would need the old tease about the person struggling to learn other European languages. "The French," says the pupil, "call it a *cuiller*; the Italians call it a *cucchiaio*; the Germans call it a *loeffel*; the English call it a *spoon*—which

is after all what it is." There is the easy mistake: the assumption that one's own language "tells it like it is," that the words *we* use are the natural names for things, and that other languages are a kind of code for one's own. It is highly unlikely that any of the early Christians would have made that sort of mistake.

The question of translating Scripture had already been faced when scribes, after the exile in Babylon, "interpreted" the ancient Hebrew Scriptures into Aramaic so the ordinary people could understand it. It was then faced even more directly by those who, somewhere between one and three hundred years before Jesus' day, translated Israel's Scriptures from Hebrew and Aramaic into Greek. Christianity was born into a world where biblical translation was already an established fact. There was little sense, as there is in the stricter forms of Islam, that the sacred language was the "real thing" and that translation meant desecration.

But if scriptural translation was already a fact of ancient Jewish life, with the Christian gospel there was an extra dimension. It was not just that there were some members of the wider believing community who happened not to read or speak Hebrew or Aramaic. It was, rather, that from the beginning the early Christians believed that Jesus was Israel's Messiah *and therefore the rightful lord of all the world*. This belief is etched across the New Testament, from the magi offering homage to the King of the Jews (Matt 2:1–12) right through to the grand declaration, in the book of Revelation (11:15), that "the kingdom of the world has passed to our Lord and his Messiah," if I may be permitted to quote my own translation here.[1] Put Pentecost in the middle of that sequence, and we get the picture. It is not just that some non-Jews might want to avail themselves of a new religious or spiritual opportunity. Nor is it the case, however, that the early Christian message had to be "translated" away from "Jewish" thought-forms and into "non-Jewish" ones in order to be "relevant" to the wider world. It is, rather, the much more robust claim—one that remains unknown to many modern Western Christians!—that Israel's Messiah was supposed to be king over the whole world, and that the resurrection had demonstrated Jesus to be this Messiah, this world king. This is, and remains, a deeply Jewish message, rooted in Israel's Scriptures, but it is a Jewish message that in its very nature demands translation. The message of the cross, declares Paul, is "a scandal to Jews and folly to Greeks." But the scandal has nothing to do with its being expressed in a different language, and the folly has nothing to do with Greeks having to learn Hebrew to read about their new lord and savior. This is the primary root meaning of the title of this paper,

"The Monarchs and the Message." For the early Christians, Jesus was the monarch, king of all the world; so the message had to be translated.

Translating the message into the world's many languages is therefore organically linked to the central claim of the gospel itself. Not to translate might imply, perhaps, that Jesus belonged, or belonged specially, to one group only—a dangerous idea that some of the earliest New Testament writings strongly opposed. That the New Testament is written in Greek, not Hebrew or Aramaic, tells its own story: this, the early writers were saying by clear implication, is the Jewish message *for the whole world*. To translate is to imply that, just as the gospel of Jesus is for all people, so the early Christian writings that bear witness to Jesus are for all people. No doubt all human languages will find it a challenge, this way or that, to express in their own idiom what the early Christians were trying to say in theirs. Losing things in translation will always be a risk. But it is a risk we recognize. It is the same risk that all Christians face when they try to express their loyalty to Jesus in their own particular lives and situations. Translation is difficult, but it is the same sort of difficulty that we face in discipleship itself.

But once we have the ancient Scriptures in English, is not that enough? Should we not be content with the wonderful earlier translations, stretching back in a long and distinguished line through the King James Version of 1611 to the great pioneer, William Tyndale, and behind him to John Wycliffe? And haven't there been far too many translations even in the last ten or twenty years? Are we not in danger of flooding the market? What about the later monarchs, particularly the two who bookend that great translating century that we might date from 1511 to 1611, from Tyndale to Laud: from Henry VIII, who staunchly opposed translating the Bible, to James I, who commissioned and authorized it?

Monarchs and Messages in the Reformation Era

Throughout my work of translation I have had in mind the debt we all still owe to William Tyndale. His story has often been told: on the run in a foreign land, in hiding, under pressure from rival Protestants with variant theologies as well as from King Henry's spies and agents. Tyndale has recently caught the public's eye once more through his appearance in Hilary Mantel's award-winning *Wolf Hall.* For some of us, though, he has been a lifelong hero. He was determined to do whatever it would take to break the long centuries of clerical monopoly and manipulation of the

sacred text—the long years when, because no new translation was being done, major distortions were happening instead—and to get the Bible into the hands of the ploughboy, the ordinary men and women, where it belonged. He knew it might cost him his life, and it did.

Why was it so difficult? Here we meet the obvious but still interesting point that the political situation of Tyndale and the King James translators could hardly be more different. Tyndale was faced with implacable opposition, because everyone from the king downward knew that a new Bible, one that ordinary people could read for themselves, could and would unleash all kinds of new forces that they would be unable to control. No doubt there was a noble motive alongside that of fear. Ancient and medieval political theorists knew just as well as we do that, though social stability is not everything, social instability is normally dangerous—dangerous not only to the wealthy and powerful but also to the "little people" who are caught up in the middle of it all.

Tyndale's understanding, however, was clear: the social, cultural, and political scene needed radical transformation, and a fresh and freshly understood Bible would be a key element in this work. I well remember when I first read Tyndale, looking for good Reformation soteriology, being surprised at how much political argument was there too. It does not surprise me now. Tyndale's translations, and his wider theological writings, including the prefaces to the individual books, were all aimed at enabling a genuine upward intellectual and spiritual mobility among the ordinary people. A freshly understood Bible, he believed, would not only result from a change in the political climate but would also help to bring that about. Here is the difference. Tyndale was translating with radical intent. King James's appointed scholars were translating—or rather, editing and adapting Tyndale, the Bishops' Bible, and the rest—with stabilizing intent. To which of these tasks, they might ask us, is the Bible better suited? It is a good question, and it has been in my mind on and off throughout my own years as a translator, which include the seven years of my active episcopate.

Tyndale, classically, was successful. "Lord," he prayed as they strangled him at the stake, "open the king of England's eyes."[2] The sign of that prayer being answered came, within a few years of his death, as the moderate reformation toward which Thomas Cromwell at least had been pushing Henry for some time arrived, and an English Bible was placed in every parish church in the land. The rest—as they often say, but in this case it is true—is history. No less than 87 percent of the King James Version is pure Tyndale, including some passages for which King James and his transla-

tors are regularly congratulated. But Tyndale's testimony remains exemplary: "I call God to record that I never altered one syllable of God's word against my conscience."[3] Oh, he had his theological leanings, of course, as we all do. But he was determined that the message should get out, no matter what the monarch might say; even though he knew that, ultimately, the quickest way to get the message spread across the land was to bring the monarch on side. He was a revolutionary, but a revolutionary with a clear vision of a new, postrevolution stability in which the king would commission and support the work of bringing the Bible to the masses.

Back in the early 1970s when I first made Tyndale's acquaintance, I determined that I should be able to say the same about my own use of Scripture as he had done about his. (I did not, at the time, imagine for a moment that I would end up as a translator, but when I did I continued to have him in mind.) When, in the 1990s, I was invited for the first time into Number 10, Downing Street, to discuss the offer of a senior job in the Church of England, I took time beforehand to stop and gaze at Tyndale's statue, a couple of streets away. There he stands, looking out across the Thames, with his printing press and his Bibles. We are not worthy to stand in his shadow. I wanted to be sure he would have approved of what I was doing. Would it help to get the Bible into the hands and hearts of the people? That was his goal, and I have tried to make it mine too.

Tyndale's vision, then, was realized, even at the cost of his own life. There then followed, of course, the turbulent period in which many others lost their lives, as monarchs and translations came and went. But, as is now well known, it was with a very different vision that King James, canny Scot that he was, commissioned the translation for which his name would become world-famous. Faced as he was with the two main parties within the church, not to mention with the challenge of holding together two very different countries under the one rule, he hit upon the idea of a joint translation project as a way not of bringing about revolution but of preventing one. For him, the monarchical message was that of unity—a theme that could of course claim considerable support from the New Testament itself. Unity is not the only virtue enjoined by the early Christian writers—it must, they insist, be balanced with holiness, for a start—but it is one of the great goods for which Christians should strive. So King James's translators, whose story has been told and retold times without number over the last few months, were set to work with a purpose at once very like Tyndale's and very unlike. He was translating in order to stir things up; they were translating in order to quiet things down again.

And where he had succeeded in his aim, they largely failed in theirs. The new Bible did not catch on at once and was powerless, thirty years later, to prevent the outbreak of civil war and the regicide to which it led. The compromise between James's bishops and England's Puritans may have lasted for his own reign, not least because of his strict control over what the Bible was allowed to say about monarchs—a point on which Tyndale had been much more dangerously explicit. But in the next reign, Bible or no Bible, the compromise did not hold. The influence of Geneva on the Puritans was too strong: not for nothing is the English reformer commemorated on the great Reformation monument in Geneva not Tyndale, not Cranmer or Ridley or Latimer, not even Richard Hooker, but Oliver Cromwell. That too was a shock to me as a young man, indicating the radical difference between what I saw the Reformation as being all about and how they saw things in Switzerland. Although since the Enlightenment we have tended to downplay the political side of theological agendas, there was no such reticence in either the sixteenth or the seventeenth century.

The difference in political context between Tyndale and King James's translators is reflected fairly directly in their words and phrases. No doubt a good deal here depends on other factors as well, not least the explosion of high-caliber English writing that came about in the age of Spenser and Shakespeare. Tyndale was writing before Hooker; James's translators, after him. But we can detect more than just the shifting of language in the contrast between the two. Even though the King James Version employs well over 80 percent of Tyndale, the changes are interesting and telling. One of Tyndale's modern editors, David Daniell, puts it like this:

> If "the former things are passed away" is preferred to "the old things are gone," then Tyndale will be disliked and there is no way to mend it. Tyndale was writing for ordinary men and women reading the Greek New Testament in English to themselves and to each other, round the table, in the parlour, under the hedges, in the fields; not for those obediently sitting in rows in stone churches being done good to by the squire at the lectern.[4]

No doubt we can detect in Daniell's polemical tone his own dislike of the social and cultural setting of later stolid Anglican worship. King James's translators were not only writing for the squire to read to the peasants, even if by the eighteenth and nineteenth century that was, de facto, quite often the case. But the point is clear, and interesting in one

particular. Daniell draws attention to the fact that Tyndale was translating very close to the Greek. Greek often goes quite directly in English, and lends itself far more than Latin to clear, sharp English prose—a point that Tyndale himself put forth in *The Obedience of a Christian Man* (1528). King James's translators were the sort who naturally thought and wrote in Latin, and that may have been part of the point. Though they were of course working with the Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic, they were scholars mindful of the dignity of their role, not fugitives desperate to get the message across. Their version, for all its brilliance and its frequent skill in gently polishing Tyndale's rough edges, had the effect—it can hardly have been completely accidental—of making the Bible once more a somewhat elevated book, just a little above the common reader. The difference between the two versions in style thus mirrors the political message. Tyndale seldom missed a chance of cutting princes down to size (though he will not alter what Paul says in Rom 13, or Peter in 1 Pet 2); King James's translators knew that that was what their master did not want at any price. But, in terms of style, Tyndale had already let the English cat out of the bag. He was responsible almost single-handedly for making the native language, which at the start of the sixteenth century was barely respectable in educated circles, into the supple, powerful, sensitive vehicle it had become by the time of Shakespeare. Thus the implicit message of his translation, as well as the explicit ones, created a world of Englishness the like of which his own monarch, Henry VIII, could never have imagined.

Many passages might make the point about style. Frequently the KJV goes with Tyndale, inch for inch (sometimes indeed into manifest error, as in Rom 6:11, where Paul's declaration that you are dead to sin but alive to God "in Christ Jesus" has become, in both, "through Jesus Christ," a significant difference). In the Johannine prologue, often quoted as an example of the wonders of the KJV, the only significant difference is that Tyndale refers to the Word as "it," where KJV has "he," until we get to the climax, John 1:14, where for Tyndale's simple word *saw* the KJV has *beheld*: "we saw the glory of it," says Tyndale; "we beheld his glory," says the KJV. I wonder if the latter was trying to bring out a possible force of the Greek *etheasametha*. I rather doubt it. I think they were going for sonorous Jacobean prose, which they certainly achieved. Famously the KJV translates *agapē* as "charity." Many grumbled when modern translations replaced it with "love." Not many realized that the modern translations were simply reverting to what Tyndale had had in the first place.

Not that Tyndale always went for the shorter word. The prodigal son's elder brother, on returning home, hears "musick and dancing" (Luke 15:25) in the KJV; for Tyndale it was "minstrelsy and dancing." (The Greek is *symphōnia*, which implies a plurality of instruments; perhaps one should translate the phrase as a hendiadys, and render it "a dance band.") More significantly, in line with his ecclesiology (one of the reasons Henry wanted to suppress him), Tyndale regularly translates *ekklēsia* as "congregation," whereas the KJV simply says "church," and renders *presbyteros* as "elder" rather than "priest." (This was the same impulse that made Tyndale insert little jabs into the margin, such as his famous line at 1 Thess 4:11, where Paul exhorts his readers to "study to be quiet, to meddle with your own business, and to work with your own hands." Tyndale's comment is pithy: "A good lesson for monks and idle friars."[5] Not the sort of thing that King James would have wanted to see.)

Sometimes, too, Tyndale's language now seems quaintly old-fashioned to us, partly I suspect because the later popularity of the KJV sustained some usages that might otherwise have dropped out, whereas Tyndale's words have moved on. When the Holy City comes down from heaven in Rev 21, we are used to the idea that she is "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (KJV, v. 2); we might raise our eyebrows at Tyndale's word, that she is prepared as a bride "garnished" for her husband. What King James's translators referred to as "the days of unleavened bread" (Acts 12:3) were for Tyndale "the days of sweet bread"; Tyndale clearly saw "leaven" as making bread sour, so that in 1 Cor 5:6 "a little leaven soureth the dough," and the Christian must have "the sweet bread of pureness and truth."

All this merely illustrates T. S. Eliot's sorrowful observation that words will not stay in place: they change their meaning, lose old resonances, and pick up new ones. Every serious student of Shakespeare or Milton, George Herbert or John Donne, knows that they used words in ways that do not quite correspond to the ways we use them now. And then there is a real problem, as C. S. Lewis pointed out in *Studies in Words*.[6] Faced with a word we do not know, we may look it up in a dictionary. But when it is a word we use every day, we probably will not look it up—even though it may have changed its meaning since the time the author was writing. Then we are condemned to misread the word, the sentence, and the passage.

We can all spot this going on when earlier translations of the Bible refer to sums of money. In the KJV the householder agrees with the day laborers to pay them a penny a day for their work (Matt 20:2). (Tyndale has a nice note at 22:19, where, explaining the tribute penny, he says, "A

penny is ever taken for that the Jews call a sickle, and is worth 10 pence sterling.")[7] A "penny" may have been a day's wage in the early seventeenth century, but it certainly is not in the early twenty-first century. I have tried in my own translation to cope with this in various ways, determined to bring out the flavor of each passage rather than swap a familiar but hopelessly inaccurate term ("penny," "pound," or "dollar") for an accurate but hopelessly unfamiliar one ("talent," "shekel," "denarius"). But we can see that problem a long way off. It is quite different when we come to a word like *Christ*: what shall we do then? And this brings us to our own day, where the "monarch" is a benevolent constitutional monarch, and the real power is wielded by the elected dictatorship we call the government. Where does the translator's shoe pinch now?

The Message of the Monarch for Tomorrow's World

For many people in the Western world, *Christ* is simply a swearword. Many have forgotten, if they ever knew, that this word has for two thousand years been firmly attached to one human being in particular. Many who have not forgotten that basic point, however, have assumed that "Christ" is simply the "surname" or family name of Jesus of Nazareth, so that "Jesus Christ" corresponds to "John Smith" or "Mary Fitzpatrick." Again, many who have not made *that* mistake have supposed that the word *Christ* conveys, and always did convey, the Christian belief that Jesus was and is the second person of the Trinity, so that "Jesus" is the "human" name of the person concerned and "Christ" is his "divine" name or title. Books have appeared with titles such as "Jesus Who Became Christ," hinting that Jesus started off as an ordinary human and was only subsequently elevated to divine status. There we have three quite different meanings of "Christ" that people today may well "hear" when they hear the word. And here is the point: *none of these corresponds to what the word conveyed in the first century*. And I believe that none of them makes the point that the New Testament needs to make in our own day. No translation is "neutral." Perhaps the biggest difference between the time of the Reformation and our own is that today most people in the Western world would simply assume that the New Testament is a "religious" text that has therefore nothing, or next to nothing, to do with how the world is run, with what we now call social or political issues. That merely shows our own captivity to post-Enlightenment Deism or Epicureanism and to the new theories of the state that it produced. What can the translator do—what *must* the

conscientious translator do—to enable the New Testament itself to make its proper, and deeply subversive, point?

In the first century the word *Christ*, or rather the Greek word *Christos,* which occurs hundreds of times in the New Testament, was the translation of the Hebrew or Aramaic term *māšîaḥ*, "Messiah." "Messiah" means "anointed" or "anointed one." In ancient Israel various people were anointed as the sign of God's commissioning: prophets, priests, and above all kings. But in Jesus' day the various meanings of "the anointed one" had narrowed down to a single focus: the coming king from the line of David, the one who would rule the whole world and establish God's justice within it. This expectation was popular (though not universally so) in first-century Judaism, and there were various interpretations of who such a "Messiah" would be, what he would do, and so on. Jesus' followers believed that this range of interpretations had been suddenly and sharply redefined in and around their Master, who had proclaimed God's kingdom, who had been executed by the Romans as the would-be "King of the Jews," but who had been raised from the dead by God and thereby declared to be truly the Messiah, Israel's king, the world's rightful lord.

Comparatively few modern Christians, let alone modern non-Christians, have much inkling of all this. But unless we try to understand it we shall never grasp two-thirds of what they were talking about. The word *Christ*, then, serves both as a central example of the problem of translation, and also as a pointer to the reality (God's claim on the whole world through his anointed servant) that is the ground plan on which the project of biblical translation stands, from which it gains its raison d'être and legitimacy. Jesus' own radical redefinition of what "lordship" was all about demands it. He will not impose his rule on people from a great height in a language they do not understand. He wants them to know, to love. Biblical translation aims to embody that quite specific aspect of the divine plan and intention.

All right: how then shall we translate *Christos*? No one English word or expression will convey what the Greek word meant to Paul, say, or to Matthew. But to leave it as "Christ" is, straightforwardly, to falsify it. I have experimented with saying "King" or "Messiah" or "the anointed one" as the different contexts seem to me to demand or at least to permit. Doing that does not solve everything. You cannot capture the full texture of an ancient word with any single, unadorned, unexplained contemporary one. But simply saying "Christ" does not get us anywhere, except back into multiple misunderstandings. Yes: translating *Christos* as "King,"

which I have often done, raises all kinds of questions. But not to do so, to leave "Christ" as either a proper name or a merely "religious" word, would be to falsify it.

Old words, then, can mislead, or simply go quiet on us. One specific aspect of that problem is that for many centuries in the Christian church the fundamentally *Jewish* rootedness of early Christianity was screened out, and with it points like the one I have just made about "Christ." This is a problem with the whole tradition from the KJV, and indeed from Tyndale before it. Faced with this, the translator has to do something (I believe) to joggle the elbow of the reader, to flash a warning light, to signal that things may not mean exactly what has been expected. This corresponds to something Jesus himself did all the time. He told strange, teasing stories about what God's kingdom was really like, to shake his hearers out of their normal assumptions. Perhaps different translations can and should do the same today.

All this may seem disconcerting to "ordinary" readers, particularly those who themselves speak only a single language. Does this mean we cannot be sure what the Bible actually means? No: for much of the time there is no reasonable doubt. The story of Jesus, and its basic meaning, normally stand out clearly even through uncertain or distorted translations. (That is not to say that all modern translations are as good as one another, or as good as they should be.) But if we want to get a better idea of why fresh translations are always needed, we have to be clear about rejecting the common idea that each language has a set of words that simply do the same job in that country as their equivalents do in ours. That works all right for "spoon" and "fork," for "mother" and "father," for "farm" and "river" and "mountain" and "egg." And a great deal besides. But there are numerous exceptions. I once received a postcard from a friend in Venice. The picture was of St. Mark's Square. Printed on the card was the Italian phrase, Campo S. Marco. But someone had added an English translation, obviously by looking up *campo* in the dictionary. The result: "St. Mark's Playing Fields"—and not a blade of grass, or a goalpost, in sight.

And this is just the beginning. What about a word like *justice*? When ancient Greek speakers used the word *dikaiosynē*, made famous by Plato in the long discussion of "justice" in his *Republic*, did they mean the same as a medieval Latin writer would have meant by *iustitia*, also translated as "justice"? And when, in late medieval English, the word *righteousness* was used to translate those same words and their cognates, was there an inner core of meaning that was simply picked up from the earlier words and

deposited in the later, or were other ideas creeping in as well? And when we, today, hear "justice," "righteousness," and similar words, do we still hear the nuances and overtones that Paul would have wanted us to hear when he used that language?

Of course not. The English word *righteousness* has had a checkered career over the centuries. For many people it now means "self-righteousness," a priggish, holier-than-thou attitude that would have horrified Paul himself. But there is more. For Paul, soaked in the Hebrew Scriptures both in their original version and in their Greek translation, the word resonated loudly with the hymns and prophecies of ancient Israel, celebrating the fact that Israel's God was faithful to his ancient promises and therefore would deliver his people from their enemies. There is no way that a modern English reader, faced with the word "righteousness," or for that matter "justice," will catch any glimpse of that warm-blooded, rich and tender, covenanted love of God for his people. Equally, if we translate the word as "covenant faithfulness," we will miss the fact that it still carries plenty of meaning to do with "justice," with things that are wrong being put right at last. We just do not have a single word, or even a single phrase, that will convey all that Paul meant when he wrote *dikaiosynē*. The best the translator can do is to set up signposts pointing in more or less the right direction, and encourage readers to read on and glimpse the larger picture within which the words will flesh themselves out and reveal more of the freight they had all along been carrying. On this point, I am sorry to say, Tyndale was in my view much too enthusiastic a follower of Martin Luther. In the famous passage in Rom 3, he oscillates between "the righteousness that cometh of God" in 3:21, "the righteousness which is good before God" in 3:22, "the righteousness which before him is of valour" in 3:25, and "the righteousness that is allowed of him" in 3:26: a combination of the genitive of origin and the objective genitive, with no sense (in my view) of what this key technical term is all about.

That is another sharp-edged example of the problem. Translation is bound to distort. But not to translate, and not to upgrade English translations quite frequently, is to collude with a different and perhaps worse kind of distortion. Yesterday's words may sound fine, but they may not say any longer what they used to say.

Another related problem faces the translator of any ancient text: the evidence is thin, and tricky to handle. Someone who compiles a modern English dictionary is swamped with information. Every novel, every newspaper, every political speech may contain either new words or new

shades of meaning for existing ones. Keeping track of these, and laying them out clearly, has driven the world-famous *Oxford English Dictionary* away from print altogether and into an online edition capable of being constantly updated. But with the ancient world things are very different. It would be possible for a single-minded scholar to read right through all known ancient Greek literature in a couple of years. One might have to give up watching television or playing golf, but it could be done. And in that entire body of literature, including inscriptions and papyrus fragments, many words occur only once. There are several such in the New Testament. And many others occur so infrequently that trying to catch their precise nuance is delicate, tricky, and often quite uncertain. Older attempts to tell you what a word meant by tracking its supposed etymology have some value, but they cannot do the whole job for you. Words are like people: discovering where they have come from does not necessarily tell you where they are now going to. We need etymology, but even more we need comparative studies from every possible angle. A half-hidden inscription here, a half-torn papyrus there, may yield clues and hints as to how an otherwise opaque word was being used in the first century. Work like this is going on all the time, and translators of the New Testament need to keep abreast of it.

Here I gladly acknowledge the contribution of one volume that has been at my elbow throughout my work on this project. I acquired my first copy of W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich's famous *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* when I graduated in theology in 1973. That was actually the second edition of their work, based in turn on the fourth edition of a much older German lexicon by Walter Bauer. Since then, the redoubtable American scholar F. W. Danker has labored mightily to upgrade "Arndt and Gingrich," producing a new, third edition so much superior to its predecessors that it is more or less a whole new work. It arrived on my desk early in 2000, when I was about to begin my present translation with a draft of Mark and Luke.[8] The arrival of Danker's new lexicon was providential. Word after word is laid out with its multiple possible meanings, with classical and other references as well as the biblical ones, and with secondary literature. So much new material has been brought together, so many out-of-the-way texts have been located, compared, and discussed, the work of so many scholars has been collated to fine-tune our understanding, that in literally hundreds if not thousands of passages we now glimpse, far more accurately than our predecessors, what precisely the New Testament writers intended. The task, like other aspects of this work,

remains never-ending, but with Danker it has taken a giant step forward. I and others are privileged to stand on his shoulders.

Or at least to wobble there. There are at least two sorts of accuracy. The first sort, which a good lexicon will assist, is the technical accuracy of making sure that every possible nuance of every word, phrase, sentence, and paragraph has been rendered into the new language. But a second sort of accuracy is perhaps deeper than this: the accuracy of flavor and feel. It is possible, in translation as in life, to gain the whole world and lose your own soul—to render everything with a wooden, clunky, lifeless "accuracy" from which the one thing that really matters has somehow escaped, producing a gilded cage from which the precious bird has flown. Such translations—the remarkable English Revised Version of the 1880s might be one such—are of considerable use to the student who wants to get close to the original words. They are of far less use to the ordinary Bible reader who wants to be grasped by the actual message of the text. Ideally, of course, the two would run together. But granted the impossibility (for the reasons already given) of the strictest kind of "accuracy," it is important from time to time to go for the accuracy of flavor and feel. The whole point of the New Testament, after all, is that it is one of the most dramatic, subversive, and life-giving collections of writings ever assembled. Lose that and you have lost the plot.

That, alas, has happened—even in the case of some of the greatest translations ever—even in the KJV itself. Anyone who doubts this should consider Rom 8:19–21:

> For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

In Paul's original Greek, this is one of the most visionary, explosive short passages anywhere in his writings. It offers a bright, clear glimpse not only of humans being rescued from sin and death but of all the world on tiptoe with hope for its own redemption, for the time when God will do for the whole of creation what he did for Jesus at Easter. But for anyone not already in tune with what Paul is saying, the phrase "the earnest expectation of the creature," offered by the KJV, would be enough to throw them right off the scent. Romans 8 offers plenty of other passages to get one's teeth into;

one might be tempted to frown, shrug the shoulders, and read on to find something a bit clearer. Cosmic hope, it seems, did not play much of a role in sixteenth-century theology, and King James's translators were not, perhaps, as interested in this passage as they might have been, even though it is arguably the climax of the whole letter to that point. What they wrote was a technically correct reproduction of the Greek. But it failed to catch the exalted and sustained excitement of this decisive passage:

> Yes: creation itself is on tiptoe with expectation, eagerly awaiting the moment when God's children will be revealed. Creation, you see, was subjected to pointless futility, not of its own volition, but because of the one who placed it in this subjection, in the hope that creation itself would be freed from its slavery to decay, to enjoy the freedom that comes when God's children are glorified. (my trans.)

I have therefore tried, in my own translation, to go for accuracy of flavor and feel, without sacrificing (I hope) word-by-word linguistic accuracy. I have wanted to catch that sense of explosive and subversive excitement, not only in Rom 8 but in passage after passage and book after book.

No doubt I have failed in all sorts of ways. But I have had to hold my nerve and do things that, if I were teaching a class in New Testament Greek, I would forbid. For instance, Greek regularly connects sentences with "and," "but," "therefore," "for," and so on. English regularly does not. There are other ways in which Greek and English go more naturally together than either does with Latin; but in this respect they are very different. English speakers leave the logical connections to be made by the reader. Sometimes we can give a nudge this way or that; often we cannot and (in my view) should not. Many times the "right" translation of such a connecting word, in terms of idiomatic and lively English, may be a comma, semicolon, or full stop. The point is this. Paul's letters are highly energetic. Filling translations of his works with stodgy, chewy words and phrases will give the reader indigestion. They may be "accurate" in one sense, but they are inaccurate in another. Such challenges mean that translation remains exciting, demanding, and never-ending.

The same has happened in the Gospels. We live in a well-developed novelistic culture where dialogue is presented by means of starting a new paragraph each time a different person speaks. All the writer has to do is to indicate occasionally who is talking, in case the reader has lost the thread. It would be tedious to go on repeating "he said" and "she said," still less "he replied to her" or "she, by way of answer, said to him." But

the New Testament writers did not have the luxury of our printed layout. Their works were copied out, not only with virtually no paragraph breaks, but with no sentence breaks—*and with no breaks between words, either*. The reader needed a lot more help, and the Gospel writers provided it. But we, who do the same thing by other means, would be frankly pedantic if we constantly said things like "Jesus answered and said to them." I have resisted the temptation to omit those connecting phrases altogether. But I have felt free to streamline, knowing that the way a modern English page is laid out will tell the reader exactly the same thing that Matthew and the others were communicating, but without the ponderous little clauses that he needed and we do not.

This leads me to a reflection about what you might call the "level" of the translation. It has long been reckoned that the KJV employs an "elevated" English style. It is grand, splendid, magisterial. It strides down the road with measured tread, never in a hurry, looking to right and left and bowing to passersby. Its cadences roll off the tongue and ring round the rafters, especially when helped on their way by the ample acoustics of an ancient parish church or cathedral. The problem is that most of the New Testament is not like that. Luke and Acts are, up to a point. Hebrews, too. But Mark? Paul?

Mark? Of course not. Mark is always in a hurry, or makes out that everybody else is. His Gospel reads as though it were dictated at speed, albeit from a well-stored and much-rehearsed corporate and individual memory. It is more like a scruffy revolutionary tract than a polished, leather-bound treatise. And Paul? Well, was anything less measured, less grand and magisterial, than the Letter to the Galatians? Is anything in the New Testament less polished, more jerky and disjointed, torn between anguish and irony, than the Second Letter to the Corinthians? Granted, Paul gets into a more measured mode in Romans. That all-time masterpiece seems to have been composed with considerable care, so that its main sections and smaller segments balance one another, rising and falling in a flow of argument. The material is every bit as passionate as Galatians or 2 Corinthians; but now it has found a vessel that can contain the passion and sustain it over a longer period. But for the most part Paul's letters are just that: letters, usually in a hurry, often anxious, frequently glancing over the shoulder at the next wave of pagan attack or unjust criticism. Paul could outthink most philosophers, let us be in no doubt. But it would falsify his letters to dress them up as polished philosophical tractates.

I have therefore tried, again no doubt with mixed success, to allow the New Testament to speak with different tones of voice, aiming often for street-level English rather than the somewhat donnish tradition of the King James, the Revised Standard Version, and the New Revised Standard Version. That is the tradition on which I was brought up, and which I still use regularly. It is not perfect, but it is a lot better than many of the alternatives. But I do not know many people today who actually talk in the way the Revised Standard Version/New Revised Standard Version tradition writes, and I suspect most of my readers do not know many such people either. (I hasten to add that the same goes for most other modern versions as well.) In my own translation, I have tried to do what I think most of the New Testament is doing: to convey the actual tones of voice of actual people.

The second thing I have had in mind is that, despite the noble vision of King James and his translators, I think it is splendid to have a wide variety of translations on offer. For King James, a single "Authorized Version" appeared as a political and social necessity. Somehow, they hoped, this book would hold together the warring factions that threatened to tear apart both church and country. The Civil War in the next generation showed only too clearly how strong the danger was, and how far short the noble aim fell. But the KJV weathered the storm, not least by the strength of its scholarship. People sometimes mock the idea of a committee producing a document, but with the KJV it was not like that. It was an exercise in collaborative scholarship. Many eyes, minds, hearts, and voices all contributed, anticipating in a measure the way in which, today, international journals, seminars, and conferences enable a rich conversation to take place and, sometimes at least, to produce fresh insight and clarity.

In the first decade of the seventeenth century, then, many translators contributed to one Bible, intending that it should be the only one. I, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, have tried to do the opposite. I have worked alone (except for the remarkable and vital help that I have received, late in the day, from Dr. Michael Lakey), intending that this translation should be one of many. When people ask me which version of the Bible they should use, I have for many years told them that I do not much mind as long as they always have at least two open on the desk. It is, of course, better for everyone to learn Greek and Hebrew. The finest translations are still, basically, a matter of trying to play a Beethoven symphony on a mouth organ. But what a new translation can perhaps do today is to jolt people out of the familiar, and open their eyes and imaginations

to new possibilities: particularly to the new possibilities that speak of the ultimate monarchy, of Jesus as the king of the world in a way that Paul and Mark understood well but most contemporary readers have hardly begun to imagine.

Like all translations, mine falls well short. It is a signpost, not the reality itself. But I hope it is a true signpost: in particular, that it is a signpost that will alert the reader to what seems to me the forgotten truth of the early Christian message. The American version of this translation is called "The Kingdom Version," and that makes the point. Most people today have forgotten, if they have ever known, what it might mean to claim, as Jesus did, that God was becoming king on earth as in heaven. Today's ruling powers, whether monarchies or not, need this message, and the church needs to be able to announce and live it. I will be happy if my translation goes even a little way toward bringing about that end.

Notes

1. Tom Wright, trans., *The New Testament for Everyone* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2011), 554.

2. David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 383.

3. Letter of Tyndale to John Frith, in N. T. Wright, ed., *The Work of John Frith* (Appleford, Oxford: The Sutton Courtenay Press, 1978), 494–95.

4. David Daniell's introduction to *Tyndale's New Testament* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), xxvii.

5. Ibid., 302.

6. C. S. Lewis, *Studies in Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

7. Daniell, Tyndale's New Testament, 50.

8. The reason I undertook this translation in the first place, I should perhaps make clear, was not for its own sake. I had agreed to write a series of guides to the New Testament—the "Everyone" series—and one thing I did not want to confuse my readers with was a discussion of differences among translations, or the reasons why I disagreed with one or other version on this or that point. Providing my own translation was the solution.

Part 3
The Impact of the King James Version: Its Reception and Influence

The Question of Eloquence in the King James Version*

Robert Alter

If there is a single attribute large numbers of readers attach almost reflexively to the King James Version, it would most likely be eloquence. The warrant for this attribution is abundantly evident. *Eloquence*, a term often associated with oratory, perhaps especially delivered orally, suggests a powerful marshalling of the resources of language to produce a persuasive effect, and that quality is manifested in verse after verse of the 1611 translation. It is an intrinsic quality of this English rendering of the Bible that no doubt has been heightened by the virtually canonical status the King James Bible came to enjoy and by the performance of passages from it in ecclesiastical settings or on other solemn occasions. If it became almost a convention in Hollywood films of the 1930s and 1940s to introduce a sonorous recitation of the twenty-third psalm in deathbed scenes, this biblical illumination of the cinematic moment was surely felt to be appropriate because the beautifully cadenced language of the King James Version of that psalm is such a moving expression of trust in God even in life's darkest moments.

The eloquence of the 1611 translation nevertheless deserves some scrutiny in regard to its sources, its nature, its relation to the original languages of the Bible, and the degree to which it may or may not be pervasive in these English renderings of the biblical texts. Let me propose at the outset that the eloquence of the narrative prose and the eloquence of the poetry are not cut from the same cloth, however much readers tend to lump them together, something they may be encouraged to do by the fact that the King James Bible provides no typographical differentiation between poetry and prose. For the prose, the committees convened by King James adopted a translation strategy, adumbrated by Tyndale a century earlier, meant to create

close equivalents for the Hebrew diction and syntax, and that resulted in a particular kind of forceful effect that was new in English. An exemplary instance is the beginning of the report of the flood, Gen 7:17–21.

> 17 And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up upon the earth.
> 18 And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters.
> 19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that *were* under the whole heaven, were covered.
> 20 Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.
> 21 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man.

It should be said that the flood story, though it shares certain features with other kinds of narrative prose in the Bible, is not entirely typical because in its solemnity and in its rhythmically choreographed account of portentous primeval events it has—both in the passages drawn from the J source and, even more, from the P document—a kind of epic grandeur. That, of course, is precisely an occasion for the exhibition of eloquence, which is finely exploited by the 1611 translators. The parallel syntax of the Hebrew, elsewhere deployed for other purposes, here is used to present a stately parade of clauses linked by "and" that report the sequence of momentous acts in which the whole earth is covered by the waters of the flood. Laying everything out in these parallel structures is not, I think, a natural way to package units of syntax in English, though it became a viable option for literary English after the King James Version. The King James translators, by following the syntactic contours of the Hebrew, achieved a new kind of compelling effect, at once lofty and almost stark. The antithetical strategy of modern translations of the Bible by sundry scholarly-ecclesiastical committees has been to repackage the syntax of the original in order to convey a sense that it might have been written in the twentieth century. What is lost in eloquence is palpable.

Compare, for example, "And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters," with the rendering of the Revised English Bible: "The ark floated on the surface of the swollen waters as they increased over the earth." The modern version is clear—the pursuit of perfect clarity being one of the great fallacies

of modern translators of the Bible—and has a certain succinct tidiness, but it loses all the high solemnity of the King James Version. Instead of the report of three actions in grand sequence conveyed by three verbs—the prevailing and the increasing of the waters and the movement of the ark over the waters—the "prevailing" of the flood is tucked into an adjective, "swollen," and the increase of the waters is relegated to a subordinate clause, with the movement of the ark now "logically" placed at the beginning of the sentence. An epic movement, in sum, has been reduced to a prosaic notation.

Beyond considerations of syntax, much of the force of the 1611 translation derives from the kind of diction to which it generally adheres, at least in the narrative prose. There is a good deal of evidence that the writers of ancient Hebrew narrative, by a tacit consensus of literary convention, used a deliberately restricted vocabulary. Synonymity, which is often rich and inventive in biblical poetry, was rigorously avoided in the prose, and a lexicon of primary terms rather than fancy literary ones was generally favored. By and large, the King James translators honor this ancient commitment to plain diction and to the repetition of terms. Note in our passage how "the flood *was* forty days upon the earth" and how "the ark *went* upon the face of the waters." The taut eloquence of the narrative inheres partly in the use, faithful to the original, of such simple primary terms—here, the verbs *to be, to go*. Alas, modern translators, evidently feeling this is not the way *they* would have written the story, have not been able to resist the temptation of improving the original. Thus, as we have seen, in the Revised English Bible the ark is made to "float," not "go," upon the waters, and in a still more fanciful exercise of editorial license, the New Jewish Publication Society translation has the ark "drift." (Are we certain that Noah's craft was rudderless?)

Other word choices in the 1611 version work equally well, even if one might have marginal reservations about a few of them. For the most part, as is evident here, a homespun Anglo-Saxon vernacular is favored that is generally a good English equivalent of the plain diction of the Hebrew. Elsewhere, the use of such polysyllabic Latinate terms as "iniquity," "tribulation," "countenance," and "habitation" might be questioned, though all those words by now bear the authoritative weight of the canonical. In our passage, "prevailed" is an interesting if slightly odd choice, probably dictated by the fact that this same Hebrew verb is used elsewhere for prevailing in battle, though the local sense seems to be something like "surged." Another reiterated verb, "increased," is a fair enough rendering of the

Hebrew and idiomatically right in context, though a small opportunity is missed in not using "multiplied," the English equivalent for this Hebrew verb that is employed in the creation story, for there is a pointed irony that the same activity of multiplication initially applied to human procreation is now attached to the destruction of all living things. The King James translators, of course, had no notion of reiterated thematic key words as a formal literary device in biblical narrative, and so their choices sometimes reproduce the device and sometimes, as here, obscure it. Nonetheless, their language in this case as in so many other instances does capture a great deal of the evocative driving force of the original. Throughout the translation of the Bible's narrative prose, the emulation in English of the Hebrew's plain diction and parallel syntax conveys the paradoxical sense of a discourse at once plain and elevated.

The case of poetry is more complicated. Biblical poetry uses a noticeably richer vocabulary than does the narrative prose, and at least some of it appears to be specialized poetic vocabulary, sometimes incorporating archaic terms and archaic grammatical forms. Because semantic parallelism between the two—in some instances, three—parts of the poetic line is fundamental to the system, the poets played with many different possibilities of synonymity, though it also should be said that usually the ostensible echoing of the first half of the line in the second half involves some sort of heightening, intensification, or even narrative development. The structure of Biblical Hebrew, in which subjects, objects, and pronominal reference can all be packed into a single word through prefixes, suffixes, or conjugated and declined forms, lends itself to a terrific compactness, a feature repeatedly exploited, rhythmically and otherwise, by the poets. The compactness is a special challenge for translators because the structure of English is so radically different, and the King James translators do not appear to have paid much attention to the conciseness of the original, focused as they were on the literal meaning of the Hebrew words and not on how they sounded. This did not prevent them from achieving effects of great eloquence in rendering the poetry, but it was often not a Hebrew eloquence, as I shall try to show.

The one bit of poetry from the King James Version that most native speakers of English know by heart is this line from Ps 23: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." It is certainly eloquent, but is the eloquence biblical? I would argue that it is not, the difference being between a wonderfully expansive utterance and a powerfully succinct one. The English deploys seventeen words, twenty

syllables. (That ratio neatly reflects the degree to which the translation on the whole aptly chooses short, simple words.) The Hebrew here shows just eight words, thirteen syllables, and sounds something like this: *gam kî-ʾēlēk bĕgêʾ ṣalmāwet lōʾ-ʾîrāʾ rāʿ*. The English makes evocative use of a string of three noun phrases, "through the valley of the shadow of death," which has the effect of spinning out the skein of the beleaguered walker's trajectory through the valley to the very brink of death. The Hebrew has not a single "of" and only one preposition, itself no more than a particle attached to the beginning of the word that means "valley." "Shadow of death" (some scholars, but not I, think it means merely "darkness") is a single word, more or less like "deathshadow," and "valley" is joined to it in what amounts to a genitive structure that dispenses with "of." The English version, though not set as verse, feels like a line of poetry, but it is a kind of free-verse poetry that is almost an anticipation of Walt Whitman. One thinks of all those lengthy lines of Whitman's that sweep on grandly across the page from left margin to right, and it is surely relevant that Whitman was influenced by the King James Version, and in particular by Psalms.

This microscopic example tells us something about the general character of the translation of poetry in the King James Version. It often reads magnificently as English verse—one recalls, among a host of memorable instances, many of the psalms, the voice from the whirlwind in Job, the haunting poem on mortality at the end of Ecclesiastes. *Eloquence* seems the proper attribute for these renderings of ancient Hebrew poetry; yet, as in the line from the twenty-third psalm, the eloquence is more Jacobean than biblical—orotund, expansive, at times exhibiting a relish in the accumulation of ringing words and syllables, whereas the Hebrew is compact and incisive.

Let me venture a general qualification about the admired eloquence of the seventeenth-century translation. Because the translators were constantly concentrating on the words, straining to work out the most precise English equivalents for each of them, they did not, as I have noted, pay a great deal of attention to the sound of the words, which, as in all poetry, is inseparable from their meaning. It is a reasonable inference that most of them worked at Hebrew as a language to be deciphered from the printed page, not as a language to be sounded or, as was the case for Jewish scholars, chanted. Intermittently, intuitively, they do appear to have listened to the sounds, as attested by the fine rendering of the great prose poem that opens the book of Ecclesiastes, where there is good evidence that the translators were picking up the mesmerizing music of the Hebrew. But

more often than most readers choose to remember, the translators exhibit an indifference to the cadences and the compactness of the Hebrew, blunting its pointed expressiveness.

Because we think automatically of eloquence when we think about the King James Version, we tend to overlook the lapses, the places where the language audibly stumbles. Here are the two lines of poetry that constitute Ps 30:9 (MT 10): "What profit *is there* in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee, shall it declare thy truth?" The compact diction of the English is admirable throughout these two lines, and the rendering of the second line, with its emphatic parallelism ("praise thee," "declare thy truth") is perfectly apt. Yet something has gone awry rhythmically in the first of these two lines. The Hebrew sounds like this: *mah-beṣaʿ bědāmî / bĕrīdtî ʾel-šāḥat.* There are exactly three words, two accented syllables, in each half of the line, with a pounding alliteration of *m*'s and *b*'s in the first half. The King James translators could have reproduced the strong rhythm—an expression of the speaker's desperate insistence—by writing, "What profit in my blood." Fearful, however, that they might be obscuring an implied meaning, they felt obliged to add the words "is there," indicating by the italics that these are merely implied (in the first edition, it would have been, less confusingly, smaller font in roman against the boldface gothic of the surrounding words). The consequence is to break the rhythm of the line. In the second half of the line, "when I go down to the pit" is a precise representation of the meaning of the three Hebrew words, but the problem with expressive sound has been magnified: it is not merely that we are given seven words for three but that the entire clause is rhythmically slack, the strong cadenced poetry of the original devolving into a prose amble.

The King James translators are at their best when they hew closely to the evocative simplicity of the Hebrew diction, as is evident in the example from the flood story or even, despite the problems of rhythm, in the two lines from Ps 30 that we have been considering. These learned churchmen—some of them were conversant in Arabic, Syriac, and Aramaic as well as Hebrew and Greek—of course viewed all of Scripture as sacred, and the assumed context of the sacred at times led them astray in their translation choices, either producing a kind of eloquence that is rather unbiblical or actually compromising the overall effect of eloquence. Memorably, at the beginning of the creation story, they have God place a "firmament" between the waters above and the waters below. "Firmament" is a medieval astronomical term (Chaucer uses it), and it in fact

has a certain etymological warrant because the Hebrew *rāqîa'*, conceived by the ancients as a vast celestial slab, derives from a verb that means "to pound out," though I am not entirely sure the King James translators were aware of the etymology. But it is something of a mouthful as an English word for "sky" and qualifies as what the Elizabethans called an inkhorn term, thus introducing an element of erudite fussiness of which there is no hint in the original. That element is even more evident when the word is used in poetry, as at the beginning of Ps 19: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." One might justifiably claim that this line of English poetry has real grandeur, but the presence of "firmament," where the Hebrew simply says "sky," imparts a note of formal elevation not intended by the ancient poet.

The reverential view of the Bible often leads the translators to opt for ecclesiastical or theologically fraught terms that give the biblical language a coloration fundamentally alien to it. In Ps 19:4 (MT 5) it is said of God that in the heavens "hath he set a tabernacle for the sun." Now, what God sets up in the heavens is actually a "tent," the ordinary word for the prosaic dwelling, often made of black goatskins, where bedouin and migratory pastoralists like Abraham make their dwelling. "Tabernacle" enters the celestial scene because the translators are thinking ecclesiastically. It may be a nice flourish, but it falsifies the original, where three plain words—"in-them" (one word in the Hebrew), "set," and "sun"—are matched by the plain word used for the sun's dwelling, *'ōhel*, "tent."

A similar elevation of an ordinary Hebrew dwelling place is observable in Ps 18:11 (MT 12): "He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him *were* dark waters *and* thick clouds of the skies." The first half of this line, up to the semicolon, seems to me just right. The second half runs into the difficulty of sprawling rhythm we noted before, reflected in the unnecessary words in italics; but more to our present purpose, "pavilion" is a suspect choice for the Hebrew *sukkâ*, which means a "shelter," in some instances the rough thatched shelter set up by a watchman in a vegetable patch. What the learned divines of the seventeenth century obviously felt was that for the Lord of Hosts in his celestial setting something grander, something more imperial, was called for, and so they gave us "pavilion," which adds an impressive clarion note but is quite unlike the original.

In addition to these instances in which the King James Version introduces alien gestures of elevation, it also imposes an alien theological frame of reference through some of the English terms it uses. That was inevitable

because the translators, after all, regarded both Testaments as inspired repositories of Christian faith. Let me mention just one recurrent instance. The 1611 translation abounds in "salvation," especially in Psalms. "God of my salvation" is a wonderfully resonant phrase, and one is loath to give it up—even I am, though I have rigorously excluded it from my own English version of Psalms. "Salvation," we all recognize, is a theologically loaded term, sometimes pointing to a vast eschatological horizon and sometimes to a dramatic transformation of the condition of the individual soul that will remain in effect for all eternity. In the world of ancient Israel, however, with its unflagging commitment to the here-and-now, the word *yĕšû'â*, which is consistently rendered in the King James Version as "salvation," as well as the verb that is cognate with that noun, plainly suggest getting out of a tight fix, whether in battle or in other situations of danger or distress. Thus the verb in question means something like "rescue," and, however it may grate on canonically tuned ears, the reiterated epithet for God actually means "God of my rescue." The God of my salvation, of course, is a deity who more comfortably dwells in pavilions than in shelters and who erects a tabernacle, not a tent, in the sky for the sun.

All this may sound, especially at this moment of four-century anniversary celebrations, like ungenerous carping, but I want to stress that what I have been saying does not constitute a stylistic critique of the King James Version. The kinds of terms about which I have been raising questions in fact often contribute to the general eloquence of this canonical translation. The problem is that in numerous places, by virtue of such momentary elevation of diction, the style becomes grandiloquent, which is fine in its own right but nothing like the original.

It is worth pursuing more broadly what the King James Version does with biblical poetry. Its rendering of the prose narratives of course affords many moving moments, but it is above all in the poetry that we feel we are being swept up by a grandeur of language that seems strongly distinctive among all the possibilities of literary English.

Melville's attunement in *Moby-Dick* to the poetry of the King James Version is deeply instructive in this regard. His aspiration, which his own contemporaries did not fathom, was to create an American prose epic that would have the cosmic reach of *Paradise Lost* and Shakespeare's tragedies and the Bible itself. And so his language is sometimes high Miltonic, more often, especially at moments of narrative intensity, Shakespearean, and very frequently biblical—all intermingled with a good deal of pungent American vernacular. But unlike other American writers whose style

bears the imprint of the King James Bible, Melville was drawn preponderantly to the poetry and not to the prose of Hebrew Scripture. He may not have fully perceived it as poetry, given the prose typography in which the translation presents it, but that would have been very much to his purpose, since he aspired to write poetic prose.

What is formally interesting is that just as he internalized the iambic cadences of Shakespeare and Milton, producing many lines of prose that are fully scannable, he also internalized the semantic parallelism that is the foundation of the biblical poetic system, creating many lines built from emphatically parallel clauses that read like lines of biblical verse. What he sensed in biblical poetry was precisely its eloquence. If the stark and explosive poetry of *Lear* in the night storm on the moor gave him a lexicon for representing the searing experience of men in an open boat on the tossing ocean in pursuit of a whale, Psalms, Job, and the Prophets offered him both a stylistic register for reaching from sky to abyss and a poetic vehicle of hammering insistence in the interechoing clauses of the parallelistic verse.

Here is an evocation of Ahab's torment, which reads like a lost verse from the book of Job, though there is no actual allusion: "He sleeps with clenched hands; and wakes with his own bloody nails." Again, in describing the vat in which whale blubber is rendered on the deck of the Pequod, Melville writes, "It smells like the left wing of the day of judgment; it is an argument for the pit." Despite two American colloquial touches here, this is a sentence that scans as a line of biblical poetry, and it would not be out of place in Isaiah.

I invoke the instance of Melville because it is always a strong testimony to genuine eloquence when it can engender a kindred eloquence in a later writer. The 1611 translation made a difference not only in the subsequent history of English poetry but also, on both sides of the Atlantic, in the evolution of English prose.

The book of Job is the ultimate test of the power and imperfections of any translation because it is the pinnacle of biblical poetry, manifesting a forcefulness, a formal virtuosity, and a vigor of inventive metaphor that make it one of the most brilliant achievements of all ancient Mediterranean poetry. It must be said that the Hebrew text of Job swarms with difficulties, perhaps at least in part because the ancient scribes, not entirely understanding the rich and sometimes exotic language they were transcribing, frequently scrambled it. One should not, then, fault the King James translators for failing to make sense of the many cruxes in

the book—their modern counterparts have done only somewhat better. But quite apart from any consideration of deciphering or reconstructing corrupted texts, how well did the 1611 translators convey the grandeur and the formal subtlety of the poetry of Job? The broad-gauge answer has to be that their own poetic performance was impressively successful, or countless English readers, Melville among them, could scarcely have responded as they have done to the strong poetry of Job's anguish or to the grand panorama of creation in the voice from the whirlwind. One must thus begin with the general assumption that the translation of Job is a prime piece of evidence for the splendid and enduring eloquence of the King James Version. Nevertheless, some qualifications are in order. Let me first offer one microscopic instance in which both the strength and the weakness of the 1611 version are evident, and then look at a whole poetic sequence.

In the great death-wish poem that begins Job's poetic argument, we encounter the following line in the King James Version: "Why died I not from the womb? *why* did I *not* give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?" (3:11). The English rendering of the first half of the line could scarcely be surpassed: "Why died I not from the womb?" These seven monosyllabic words, with three accents, perfectly convey the forceful compactness of the Hebrew. As a translator, I envy the freedom of my seventeenth-century predecessors to deploy the rhythmically concise inversion, "died I not," where modern usage compels one to settle for "did I not die." But in the second half of the line, the translation becomes unhinged: "*why* did I *not* give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?" The entire clause is arhythmic, and it offers a full sixteen words for the three in the Hebrew—an unconscionable disproportion, I would say. This version reflects a certain literalist impulse of clarification—note the supplying of the italicized "why" and "not," which are quite unnecessary—and though "give up the ghost" is a fine old phrase, there surely are more compact English synonyms for dying. It is hard to resist the inference that the King James translators often relished the proliferation of words, a stylistic habit that could generate a kind of eloquence, though not, I think, here, but an eloquence antithetical to the original.

For a fuller picture of what the King James Version does with ancient Hebrew poetry, let us now consider the first eight lines of Job 7.

> 1 Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his days also like the days of an hireling?

2 As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work:
3 So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.
4 When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.
5 My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and becomes loathsome.
6 My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.
7 O remember that my life is wind: mine eye shall no more see good.
8 The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more: thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.

The passage starts on the left foot in a series of stumbling steps that do scant justice to the somber music of the Hebrew but concludes in beautifully eloquent starkness rather like the original. The problem with the first four lines is too many unnecessary words, too many syllables. One does not really need all the inserted words in "*are not* his days also like the days of an hireling" when "like an hireling his days" would have served perfectly well. The second verse vividly illustrates the propensity, not often noticed by adulatory readers, to explain things that should not be explained. The awkward "earnestly desireth" is a kind of glossing representation of a concrete Hebrew verb that means, quite vividly in this context, "pant." Even in the seventeenth century, "earnestly desireth" is a phrase that sounds as though it belonged more in a legal document or a business communication than in a haunting poem. Stipulating "*the reward* of his work" is gratuitous, as the italics virtually confess. The Hebrew *pōʿal* means both "work" and, by metonymy, the consequences of work, "wages" or "pay," and surely one of those two terms would have stood on its own without the italicized gloss.

The second half of verse 4 is an even more egregious instance of the same problem—"I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of day." The Hebrew idiom for insomnia is "wandering" (in the context of sleep, "tossing" is a decent equivalent), with "sleep" an implied or actual object. The 1611 translators were afraid this would be somehow unclear, and so they stuck in the clumsy and unneeded "to and fro." "The dawning of day" reflects a single plain word for dawn or morning twilight in the Hebrew, *nešep*. The consequence of all this explanatory fiddling in the English is an ungainly and altogether arrhythmic line. A better approximation of the original, which also happens to render it quite literally, would be: "I was sated with tossing till dawn."

But after the sundry mishaps of the first four lines, the translators suddenly hit their stride with "My flesh is clothed with worms" and what follows. At this point, the seventeenth-century version succeeds in replicating in poetry what it often does so well in prose, emulating the elegant simplicity of the Hebrew diction and even catching something of its cadences: "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope." "Spent" is a particularly fine choice, being close to a pun because we speak in English of "spending time," and "spent" also means "exhausted" or "played out," which is more or less the sense of the Hebrew. This becomes an apt compensation for a different pun in the Hebrew since the word for "hope" has a homonym that means "thread," taking us back to the weaver. And so the translation continues, nearly flawless in its moving rhythmic solemnity: "O remember that my life *is* wind: mine eye shall no more see good."

It has not been my intention to expose the stylistic beauty of the King James Version as merely a long-standing cultural delusion. The impressive power of the canonical English Bible is surely secure, and it continues both to nourish us as readers and to provide a wealth of resources for English writers. My argument has been rather that we all tend to remember books selectively just as we remember almost everything else selectively. Having been moved by the lofty dignity, the poised cadences, and the plain directness of the King James Version in many passages, we are inclined to imagine in recollection that the entire translation is like that. In point of fact, the grandeur of the 1611 version is not infrequently interrupted by stylistic lapses, awkwardness, and patches of gratuitous wordiness. Job 3:11, which we have looked at closely, is a microcosmic instance of the ups and downs of the King James Version, the first half of the line beautifully felicitous, the second half, a long stumble. But even when the translation is wonderfully eloquent, the nature of the eloquence is often quite different from the biblical original. It comes closest to the biblical style, as I tried to illustrate at the outset, in the narrative prose. Its treatment of the poetry, on the other hand, owes its eloquent force sometimes to an echoing of the images and the formal configurations of the original and sometimes, rather more often, to its transformation of the original into a different stylistic mode that draws on indigenous English patterns of expression.

This amalgam of disparate cultures and styles resulted in a great many sublime passages that have illuminated the inner lives and enchanted the poetic ear of English speakers for four centuries. One particularly memorable instance is the 1611 rendering of the anonymous prophet of

the Babylonian exile—the sweetest of biblical poets—whose writings are appended to the book of Isaiah. Let me cite just two verses, four lines of poetry, from the beginning of Isa 40. After a verse that is one of those left-footed moments involving two misconstructions ("Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem … that her warfare is accomplished"), this is how the King James translators make the Hebrew poet sing in English: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain." This is sonorous English poetry that lifts the spirit, as truly eloquent language can do. One readily sees how it helped inspire the soaring music of Handel's *Messiah*; how it, and passages like it, ignited answering sparks in the celebratory verse of Whitman, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Hart Crane. Though the King James Bible may not be altogether what reverential recollection makes of it, after four hundred years its grand language still rings strong.

NOTE

* An earlier version of this essay appeared in David Lyle Jeffrey, ed., *The King James Bible and the World It Made* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2011), 135-47. This version has additional material.

The King James Bible Apocrypha: When and Why Lost?

Andrew E. Hill

The program title for this paper reads as follows: "The King James Bible Apocrypha: When and Why Lost?" I have alternatively titled the paper: "Now You Read Them, Now You Don't! Whither the Apocrypha in the King James Bible?"

Introduction

In this paper I will first set the English Bible translation context for the King James Bible (KJB); review the making and early publication history of the KJB with respect to the Old Testament Apocrypha; examine the reactions to the KJB by the English Puritans and Scottish Presbyterians; survey the publication history of the later editions of the KJB with respect to the Apocrypha; rehearse the British and Foreign Bible Society controversy over the place of the Apocrypha in the KJB; comment on the more recent history of the place of the Apocrypha in the KJB; and finally draw conclusions by way of summary.

I recognize that for two streams of the Christian tradition, the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, the books under discussion are deemed deuterocanonical. Since the subject of this paper is the place of the Old Testament Apocrypha in the King James Bible, the Protestant term for the collection, *Apocrypha*, will be used throughout.

The Apocrypha in the Sixteenth-Century English Context

Martin Luther's translation of the Bible into German in 1534 was a significant achievement for numerous reasons. Perhaps lesser known among

these reasons is what the twentieth-century Bible translator E. J. Goodspeed has noted as "Luther's striking innovation in gathering the Apocrypha out of the Old Testament and putting them by themselves" at the end of the Old Testament.[1] Luther's view of the Old Testament Apocrypha is well known and often quoted. Following Jerome and based on the principle of Hebrew canon verity, Luther titled the collection "Apocrypha—that is, books that are not held equal to the Holy Scriptures and yet are good and useful to read."[2] Luther's decision to place the Apocrypha as a separate block between the Old and New Testaments set the precedent for all Protestant English Bibles that followed. Likewise, a preface qualifying the authority of the collection, which Owen Chadwick says "was already becoming established as a warning," became the standard.[3]

Notable among the English translations of the Bible printed in the sixteenth century are:

1. The Miles Coverdale Bible (1535), which placed the Apocrypha (minus Baruch and the Prayer of Manasseh) in a separate appendix at the end of the Old Testament (following Luther). Coverdale's preface to the appendix recognizes that the books of the Apocrypha are not of like reputation with the other Scriptures and are not to be used to confirm ecclesiastical doctrine, but are profitable for reading.[4]

2. William Tyndale died in 1536 before completing his translation of the Old Testament. F. F. Bruce conjectures that Tyndale's Old Testament would have followed the canonical order of Luther (since this is the case with the NT), and that he probably would have translated the Apocrypha and included it as an appendix to the Old Testament, located directly after it and before the New Testament.[5]

3. Matthew's Bible (1537) was a reworking of both the Coverdale and Tyndale translations. The Apocrypha was placed as an appendix to the Old Testament and positioned between the two Testaments.

4. Taverner's Bible (1539), a reworking of Matthew's Bible (produced largely by Edmund Becke), placed the Apocrypha (including 3 Maccabees) in an appendix to the Old Testament and positioned between the Testaments with an explanation that these books were profitable to read but were not to be considered inspired Scripture.

5. The Great Bible (commissioned by King Henry VIII and published in 1539) was intended to function as the Authorized Version for the Church of England. The books of the Apocrypha were collected in an appendix to the Old Testament and included a preface echoing the sentiments of Jerome as to the status of the books.

6. The Geneva Bible (1560) placed the books of the Apocrypha (minus the Prayer of Manasseh) in an appendix at the end of the Old Testament , and included a preface that these books were not to be read or expounded publicly in church and could only prove doctrine inasmuch as they agree with the Protocanon (OT and NT). The 1560 edition came to be known as the Breeches Bible for its rendering of Gen 3:7: "Adam and Eve made breeches for themselves out of fig leaves."

7. The Bishops' Bible (1568) was a revision of the Great Bible made under the authority of Elizabeth and necessitated by the publication and popularity of the Geneva Bible. The treatment of the books of the Apocrypha in the Great Bible was retained.

8. The Douai-Rheims Bible (1582–1610) became the vernacular Bible for English Roman Catholics. The Douai-Rheims Bible was translated from the Latin Vulgate and followed the canonical ordering of the later editions of the Vulgate with the books of the Apocrypha inserted appropriately by genre within the Old Testament. The Douai-Rheims Old Testament was published in two volumes in 1609 and 1610.

So then, the historical context for Protestant English translations of the Bible out of which the KJB would emerge was one that included placing the books of the Apocrypha as a separate collection at the end the Old Testament. Typically, the Apocrypha had some kind of prefatory note echoing the assessments of Jerome and Luther, to the effect that those books were not of the same reputation or like quality of divine inspiration as the rest of the Scriptures, and were not used generally to confirm Bible doctrine, although they were profitable reading for the church.

The King James Bible

Article 6 of the Church of England's Thirty-Nine Articles (1563) distinguishes the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments from the "other books" (following the precedent of Jerome). This article authorizes the reading of these "other books" (the Apocrypha), stating, "the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine."[6] Naturally, the KJB translators assigned one of the six translation committees to translate the Apocrypha.[7] Of interest is the comment by King James himself in 1599 that, "as to the Apocriphe bookes, I omit them because I am no papist."[8] Later, in 1616, King James made a fuller statement on the inspiration and worth of the Apocrypha:

> As for the Scriptures, no man doubteth I will believe them. But even for the Apocrypha, I hold them in the same accompt that the Ancients did. They are still printed and bound with our Bibles, and publicly read in our churches. I reverence them as the writings of holy and good men. But since they are not found in the Canon, we accompt them to be *secundae lectionis or ordinis* (which is Bellarmine's own distinction) and therefore not sufficient whereupon alone to ground any Article of Faith, except it be confirmed by some other place of Canonical Scripture; concluding this point with Rufinus (who is no Novelist, I hope) that the Apocryphal books were by the Fathers permitted to be read, not for confirmation of doctrine, but only for instruction of the people.[9]

Seven years after the Hampton Court Conference commissioned a new translation of the English Bible, the King James Bible of 1611 was published. And indeed, the King James Bible included the Apocrypha collected as an appendix between the Old and New Testaments. F. C. Medford notes that the KJB "omits any preface to the 'bookes called Apocrypha,' but they are marked by a running headline 'Apocrypha' at the top of the page. These books are also included in the table of Old Testament lessons given in the front matter of the book."[10] Curiously, there is some ambiguity concerning the issuing of the first edition of the King James Bible. John Brown suggests, "There seem to have been two impressions of the first edition of 1611, probably due to the impossibility of one printing office being able to supply in the time allotted the 20,000 copies required."[11] These impressions became known as the "He" and "She" editions based on their readings of Ruth 3:15 (that is, whether "he" [Boaz] or "she" [Ruth] returned to the village in the morning after the night spent at the threshing floor). David Norton, however, is of the opinion that the "She" Bible can authentically be identified as a second rather than first edition of the KJB, even though one of its varying forms may date from as early as 1611.[12] In the first three years, the KJB was produced in fourteen editions in various formats. The volume and haste of this production schedule understandably resulted in the introduction of many printers' errors.[13] It would take fifty years for the KJB to overtake the popularity of the Geneva Bible. The competition for Bible sales in the English market should be noted here. The imported Geneva Bible was cheaper, less bulky, and better produced than the early printings of the KJB. The final known edition of the Geneva Bible was published in 1644, and "As a result, the King James Bible enjoyed new commercial success."[14]

Copies of the Geneva Bible excluding the books of the Apocrypha were printed as early as 1599, primarily in the Low Countries of Europe. This leads Bruce Metzger to conclude that "it would seem that the practice of issuing copies of the Bible without the Apocrypha continued."[15] This practice accounts for the edict issued in 1615 by George Abbot, the archbishop of Canterbury, that forbade the publication of Bibles without the Apocrypha, at the threat of one year in prison. According to G. G. Michuta, since smaller Bibles were cheaper to produce, "economic incentives proved stronger than the threats of the Archbishop, and editions without the Deuterocanon were sporadically produced."[16] Metzger previously had made a similar observation, noting that in the case of editions of both the Geneva Bible and the KJB issued without the Apocrypha, the work was apparently that of the binders or printers "who perhaps wished to satisfy an increasing demand for less bulky and less expensive Bibles."[17] Early editions of the KJB excluding the books of the Apocrypha included those dated to 1619, 1626, 1629, 1630, 1632, and 1633.[18] Of interest here are the vestiges of the Apocrypha in those editions of both the Geneva Bible and the KJB that omitted the books of the Apocrypha. For example, a 1599 edition of the Geneva Bible omitted the books of the Apocrypha, but not their pages, which were left blank and unnumbered between the Old and New Testaments.[19] Similarly, for nearly a century after its publication in 1611, editions of the KJB issued with or without the Apocrypha retained the 113 margin references to the Apocrypha books. According to Metzger, during the 1700s, "when the margins came to be crowded with references, all references to the Apocrypha were omitted."[20]

Reactions to the King James Bible

The first edition of the KJB published without the Apocrypha appeared in 1619, and another in 1626, less than twenty years after the introduction of the Authorized Version. This was largely due to influence of the English Puritans and Scottish Presbyterians. Numerous objections against the Apocrypha were raised, among them the principle of Hebrew verity (i.e., the books of the Apocrypha are not found in the Hebrew Bible), increasing antipapal and anti–Roman Catholic sentiments among several of the Protestant groups, antiroyalist sentiments among the English Nonconformists, matters of divine inspiration and the doctrine of Scripture, and the practical concern that these books "were for the most part so sensational in character and on so low a moral and religious level."[21]

One of the early critics of the KJB was the distinguished but widely disliked Hebrew scholar, Hugh Broughton, who had been snubbed by the KJB translation and revision committees, despite his erudition in the biblical languages. Before his death in 1612, Broughton sent a critique of the KJB to one of the king's attendants lamenting that the new Bible was so ill done and calling for it to be burned.[22] Later in 1643 and 1645, in sermons delivered before the House of Commons, John Lightfoot denounced the apocryphal books as the "wretched Apocrypha" and a "patchery of human invention."[23] Lightfoot called upon Parliament to review the translation of the KJB and remove anything amiss therein (including the printing of the books of Apocrypha between the Old and New Testaments). At issue was the growing influence of Puritanism and the dissatisfaction with the authority of the KJB and the monarchy it represented. The outbreak of the English Civil War in 1642 gave the Puritans an opportunity to demand a revision of the KJB or even a new Bible translation commissioned by Parliament. E. C. Bissell comments: "Providentially, it was not left to the government of England to interfere in the matter, but without any special official act these books [i.e., the Apocrypha] came, as by common consent, to be omitted from new editions of the Authorized Version."[24]

The Westminster Confession of 1648 reflects the sentiments of those opposed to the inclusion of the Apocrypha in English Bibles:

> Chap. 1. Article III. The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the Canon of Scripture; and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings.

Later Editions of the KJB

Ongoing tensions between the Church of England, on one side, and the Puritans, Presbyterians, and all other Nonconformists, on the other, led to the KJB being printed repeatedly without the Apocrypha. Chadwick reports that during the parliamentary period, the two decades between the beginning of the English Civil War in 1642 and the restoration of the monarchy with the installation of Charles II in 1660, "hardly any Bibles were printed which contained the Apocrypha."[25] Indeed, in Chadwick's estimation, after 1630 Bibles without the Apocrypha were so widely in use that this was "all that most ordinary citizens needed or wanted."[26] That changed, however, when Charles II was restored to the English throne.

John Field published an edition of the KJB at Cambridge that included the Apocrypha and dedicated the work to the new king. Alister McGrath observes, "With Charles II restored to the English throne, and a growing public backlash developing against the excesses of the period of the Puritan Commonwealth, the earlier Puritan opposition to the King James Bible virtually guaranteed that it would be the established translation of the new administration."[27]

The Savoy Conference of 1661 was a liturgical discussion between representatives of the Church of England and representatives of the Puritan and Presbyterian dissenting factions, ostensibly for the purpose of revising the Book of Common Prayer. The conference failed to reach any significant compromise, prompting the Protestant dissenters to essentially split from the Church of England. The Act of Uniformity was enacted in 1662 after the ill-fated Savoy Conference. It required the use of all the rites and ceremonies in the Book of Common Prayer of 1662 in church services. As a result of these developments, "the Puritans renewed their onslaught upon the use of apocryphal writings in the church."[28] Chadwick cites further examples from the period illustrating the controversy over the inclusion of the Apocrypha in the Bible, including the publication of a pamphlet in 1689 entitled *A Letter on the Present Convocation*, which said that the clergy were being forced to read "ridiculous things to people instead of the Word of God—Tobit and his dog, and Bel and the Dragon." Chadwick notes that a rejoinder was issued that asked whether the Scripture readings from books like Chronicles or Ezra or Nehemiah were more edifying to the people than readings from Wisdom or Ecclesiasticus. And the publication in 1740 of an *Essay on the Books Commonly Called Apocrypha*, written anonymously by "A Lover of Truth," called for legislation that would make it illegal to bind the Apocrypha between the Old and New Testaments.[29] Worth mentioning here is the extent to which the Old Testament apocryphal books were included in the lessons of the Book of Common Prayer. The 1662 Book of Common Prayer lists 56 readings from seven books of the Apocrypha in the Table of Lessons (Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon). The 1789 iteration of the Book of Common Prayer lists 82 readings from seven books of the Apocrypha in the Table of Lessons (2 Esdras, Tobit, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Song of the Three Children, and 1 Maccabees).

By way of summary, according to one source, between 1632 (when one of the early editions of the KJB without the Apocrypha appeared) and the decision of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) in 1826

to withhold funding from Bible societies that produced Bibles with the Apocrypha, 579 editions of the KJB were published in England. A total of 227 of those editions, or approximately 40 percent, were published without the Apocrypha. These statistics would indicate, however, that despite the opposition of the Puritans and Presbyterians, there was still a strong presence of the Apocrypha in the KJB for about two centuries after its initial publication in 1611.[30]

Harold Scanlin breaks down the percentages of non-Apocrypha Bibles published during this time period more precisely, noting: 14 percent (15 of 110 editions) of the KJV and Geneva Bibles published between 1611 and 1639 lacked the Apocrypha; 65 percent (48 of 73 editions) of the Bibles published between 1639 and 1660 lacked the Apocrypha; and the percentage of non-Apocrypha Bibles published between 1660 and 1700 only dropped to 60 percent. Scanlin's statistic for non-Apocrypha Bibles published for the period immediately subsequent to the publishing of the KJB (1611–1700) is 62 percent.[31]

The increasing separation of the books of the Apocrypha from the Old and New Testaments in the publication of the KJB is mirrored in the reduction of reading lessons from the Apocrypha in the Church of England Lectionary across the same time period. The reading lessons of the 1549 Lectionary included 108 readings from the Apocrypha for 54 days of the church year (or 74 percent of the total chapters in the books of the Apocrypha). By contrast, the revised Church of England Lectionary of 1871 included 42 readings for 21 days of the church year (or 22 percent of the total chapters in the books of the Apocrypha).[32] The Irish Church removed all readings from the Apocrypha from its Scripture lessons after becoming independent of the Church of England in 1871.[33]

British and Foreign Bible Society Controversy

The British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) was founded in 1804. The circles that founded and financed the society mostly belonged to the so-called evangelical party within the state church, or they were Nonconformists.[34] Both groups strictly rejected Bibles with the Apocrypha. At issue was the interpretation of the society's trust deed, which called for the raising of funds to print the Holy Scriptures. A majority of the society agreed that the books of the Apocrypha were not part of the Holy Scriptures and should not be published in English Bibles. So essentially from its founding, BFBS did not issue English Scriptures with the Apocrypha.

More controversial was the issue of whether BFBS should finance the publication of foreign Bibles that retained the books of the Apocrypha or any national Bible society that engaged in the circulation of such Bibles. BFBS resolved in 1813 to let the foreign Bible societies determine for themselves what made up the "Holy Scriptures," since the production and distribution of Bible with the Apocrypha was not prohibited in the BFBS bylaws. BFBS "acted pragmatically … in order not to endanger the young Bible Society movement."[35] In 1819 the Scottish Presbyterian evangelist Robert Haldane pressured BFBS to reverse its decision of 1813 and withdraw all support of foreign Bible societies producing and distributing the Apocrypha. A compromise decision was reached in 1822 providing funds from BFBS to foreign Bible societies only for the printing of Bibles without the Apocrypha. The resolution was unsatisfactory for Haldane and the Scots, who threatened to separate from BFBS.[36] So the debate continued, and culminated in a vehement two-year battle from 1824 to 1826, after which BFBS adopted a policy in 1826 and 1827 that forbade participation in the circulation of the Apocrypha and disallowed financial aid to any society engaging in the circulation of Bibles that included the Apocrypha. The American Bible Society (ABS) followed the lead of BFBS and adopted a similar policy in 1828.[37] For some, the BFBS regulations adopted in 1826 mark the end of the KJB Apocrypha controversy.[38] As an aside, the debate over the Apocrypha was so heated that in 1825 BFBS took action to strike all discussion of the topic from the society's records dating back to 1811.[39]

The Convocation of the Province of Canterbury decided to take up the work of revision of the Authorized Version in 1870. The English Revised Version (RV) of the New Testament appeared in 1881 and the RV of the Old Testament appeared in 1885. For some, the recognition of the RV of 1885 by the archbishop of Canterbury as the Bible for the Church of England marked the effective removal of the Apocrypha from the KJB. Though some had hoped that this would constitute once and for all the end of the Apocrypha as a part of the KJV tradition, this hope was belied when the RV revision of the Apocrypha was published ten years later in 1895.

Twentieth Century to the Present Day

Since the BFBS decisions of 1826 and 1827 restricting the publication and distribution of Bibles containing the Apocrypha, most editions/reprintings of the KJB omitted the Apocrypha. Ross has noted, "By the end of the [nineteenth] century it was unusual for the Apocrypha to be printed with

any English Bibles except those intended for pulpit or lectern use."[40] The publication of editions of the Revised Standard Version (RSV) with Apocrypha (1957) sparked new interest in these. The RSV was the authorized revision of the American Standard Version of 1901, a translation that had never included the Apocrypha.

The American Bible Society lifted its restrictions on the publication of Bibles with the Apocrypha in 1964. BFBS followed suit in 1966. Since then these Bible societies have published and distributed some editions of the KJB and other versions of the Bible with the books of the Apocrypha.

The New English Bible (1970) and the New Revised Standard Version (1989) have published editions of the Bible that include the Deuterocanonicals/Apocrypha. King James Bibles with Apocrypha, including 400th anniversary and 1611 facsimile editions, have been and remain available from several publishers. Perhaps it is fitting, ironically so, that one publisher is currently offering two anniversary editions of the 1611 King James Bible, one with the Apocrypha and one without! At one level, the marketplace still drives Bible translation, revision, and publication.

Conclusions

In summary, the Apocrypha were never entirely lost from the King James Bible during its nearly four-hundred-year publication history. The Apocrypha were indeed separated from the KJB in many of its editions, beginning quite early in its publication history. That the Apocrypha were persecuted by the Puritans, as Frederic Kenyon claimed, or exiled by the Protestants, as Michuta bemoans, is only part of the story behind the separation of the Apocrypha from the KJB.[41] Clearly, the decisions of BFBS and ABS in the early nineteenth century not to support the publication of Bibles with the Apocrypha had a dramatic influence on the place of the Apocrypha in the KJB.

But like most historical developments, the outcome is both event and process, the result of a complex combination of human and circumstantial factors, in this case including: the economic realities of Bible publishing, competing and conflicting political loyalties of the age (royalists versus parliamentarians), the principle of Hebrew verity with respect to the canon of the Hebrew Bible, the long-standing tradition of using the Apocrypha in the church liturgy, theological conviction related to the biblical teaching of the inspiration of Scripture and the limits of the biblical canon (especially among the English Puritans and Scottish Presbyte-

rians), and the growing factionalism among Protestants in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—all this and more contributed to the story of the separation, but not the complete loss, of the Apocrypha from the King James Bible.

Notes

1. E. J. Goodspeed, *The Story of the Apocrypha* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 5.

2. As cited in E. C. Bissell, *The Apocrypha of the Old Testament* (New York: Scribner's, 1880), 54.

3. Owen Chadwick, "The Significance of the Deuterocanonical Writings in the Anglican Tradition," in *The Apocrypha in Ecumenical Perspective* (ed. Siegfried Meurer; trans. Paul Ellingworth; United Bible Societies Monograph Series 6; New York: United Bible Societies, 1991), 116.

4. See the complete text of Coverdale's preface to the Apocrypha in F. F. Bruce, *History of the English Bible* (3rd ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 60–61.

5. F. F. Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 102–3.

6. The delineation of these "other books" known as the OT Apocrypha in the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England includes: The Third Book of Esdras, The Fourth Book of Esdras, The Book of Tobias, The Book of Judith, The Rest of the Book of Esther, The Book of Wisdom, Jesus the Son of Sirach, Baruch the Prophet, The Song of the Three Children, The Story of Susanna, Of Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Manasses, The First Book of Maccabees, The Second Book of Maccabees.

7. The "second" Cambridge translation company was assigned the books of the Apocrypha (see S. L. Greenslade, "English Versions of the Bible, 1525–1611," in *The West from the Reformation to the Present Day* [vol. 3 of *The Cambridge History of the Bible*; ed. S. L. Greenslade; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963], 164–65). This company included John Duport, John Bois, William Branthwaite, Andrew Downes, Jeremiah Radcliffe, Robert Ward, and Samuel Ward. See further B. F. Westcott and W. A. Wright, *History of the English Bible* (3rd ed.; London: Macmillan, 1905), 112–14, 343–50; and Adam Nicolson, *God's Secretaries*: *The Making of the King James Bible* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003), 251–59. Greenslade has assessed the translation of the apocryphal books as "the weakest part of the Authorized Version" ("English Versions," 170).

8. "King James' View of the Apocrypha." Online: http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus:text:1999.03.0071&query=page%3D%23116.

9. "King James' View of the Apocrypha." Online: http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1616james1.html.

10. F. C. Medford, "The Apocrypha in the Sixteenth Century: A Summary and Survey," *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 54 (1983): 353.

11. John Brown, *The History of the English Bible* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911), 109.

12. David Norton, *A Textual History of the King James Bible* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 65.

13. Ibid., 62–64.

14. Alister McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Random House, 2001), 284.

15. B. M. Metzger, *An Introduction to the Apocrypha* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), 197.

16. Gary G. Michuta, *Why Catholic Bibles Are Bigger* (Wixom, Mich.: Grotto, 2007), 285.

17. Metzger, *Introduction to the Apocrypha*, 197.

18. See Chadwick, "Significance of the Deuterocanonical Writings," 120; and Metzger, *Introduction to the Apocrypha*, 197.

19. Michuta, *Why Catholic Bibles Are Bigger*, 283.

20. Metzger, *Introduction to the Apocrypha*, 188.

21. Goodspeed, *Story of the Apocrypha*, 6.

22. Bruce, *History of the English Bible*, 107. Nicolson (*God's Secretaries,* 227) describes Broughton as "a cantankerous and aggressive Puritan Hebrew scholar" who was barred from the KJB translation committee "because of his incivility."

23. Bissell, *Apocrypha of the Old Testament*, 56.

24. Ibid.

25. Chadwick, "Significance of the Deuterocanonical Writings," 121.

26. Ibid.

27. McGrath, *In the Beginning,* 287.

28. Chadwick, "Significance of the Deuterocanonical Writings," 121.

29. Ibid.

30. See W. Gundert, "The Bible Societies and the Deuterocanonical Writings," in Meurer, *Apocrypha in Ecumenical Perspective*, 136 (as cited in S. Amsler, "La politique d'édition des Sociéteés bibliques au XIXe siècle et le canon de l'Ancien Testament," in *Le canon de l'Ancien Testament* [ed. Jean-Daniel Kaestli and Otto Wermelinger; Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1984], 318). By way of comparison, Herbert records eighty editions of the KJB issued in England between 1826 and 1960. Only nine of those editions, or 8.88 percent, included the books of the Apocrypha (see A. S. Herbert, *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of the English Bible, 1525–1961* [London: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1968]). Further statistical analysis by Jack P. Lewis ("Some Aspects of the Problem of Inclusion of the Apocrypha," in Meurer, *Apocrypha in Ecumenical Perspective*, 161–207) reveals that between the years 1800 and 1957 there were 1,114 Bible issues in the United States, including, but not restricted to, the KJB. A total of 189 of those Bible issues included the Apocrypha/deuterocanonical books, or 17 percent of the Bibles published during that time period. Lewis's statistics are based on the work of Margaret. T. Hills, *The English Bible in America* (New York: American Bible Society, 1971).

31. Harold P. Scanlin, "Authority, Canon and the Bible Societies," in *Text, Theology and Translation: Essays in Honour of Jan de Waard* (ed. S. Crisp and M. Jinbachian; New York: United Bible Societies, 2004), 182. Scanlin adds this explanatory note: "almost all of the non-Apocrypha Bibles are either octavo or duodecimo, undoubtedly

preferred by private owners. Almost all folio and quarto Bibles included the Apocrypha. The Anglican Church would require pulpit Bibles to include the Apocrypha, especially since the Lectionary included readings from the Apocrypha throughout almost all of the Church's history."

32. "A New Daily Office Lectionary." Online: http://39articles.com/samples/001-fry-lectionary.htm.

33. See Chadwick, "Significance of the Deuterocanonical Writings," 123.

34. See ibid., 122.

35. Gundert, "Bible Societies and Deuterocanonical Writings," 136–37.

36. See further ibid., 137–38.

37. Lewis, "Some Aspects," 163.

38. For example, Gundert, "Bible Societies and Deuterocanonical Writings," 136.

39. Bissell, *Apocrypha of the Old Testament*, 567.

40. J. M. Ross, "The Status of the Apocrypha," *Theology* 82 (1979): 190; see also Metzger, *Introduction to the Apocrypha*, 202.

41. Frederick Kenyon, as cited in Goodspeed, *Story of the Apocrypha*, 6; see Michuta, *Why Catholic Bibles Are Bigger*, 287ff.

"Not of an Age, But for All Time": King James and Master Will, Words with Thoughts

C. Clifton Black

In the slender space of twenty years not one but two corpora exploded the course of English language and literature. I know of no other culture in which a revolutionary convergence of such magnitude occurred. Two centuries separate Goethe (1749–1832) from Luther's Bible (1534). Pushkin (1799–1837) consolidated Russia's vernacular a century after East Slavic's push and pull between Church Slavonic and Peter the Great (1672–1725). From 1590 to 1611 England witnessed the emergence of *both* Shakespearean poetry *and* the King James Bible. The world has never been the same since. The Bard of Avon is now regarded as the preeminent dramatist on the world's stage; no book has been published more often, in more versions, than *The Holy Bible* of 1611. Such are adequate reasons to consider both in tandem, though neither corpus intersected with the other,[1] and either easily overpowers a brief essay's scope and a single essayist's competence.

1

One easily identifies differences between these corpora. A professional playwright, Shakespeare (1564–1616) wrote for a secular audience in open air; the divines at Oxford, Cambridge, and Westminster crafted an instrument for worshippers in the young Church of England. The king's translators were wedded to Scripture; state censorship permitted Shakespeare to dramatize almost anything but Scripture.[2] The six companies overseen by Archbishop Richard Bancroft (1544–1610) were constrained by royal mandates for collaboration and a common belief that God had authored the sacred text;[3] Shakespeare (one imagines) enjoyed comparatively unfettered

freedom in generating works of individual genius. Miles Smith and his colleagues proceeded conservatively; Shakespeare's talent exfoliated with lush liberality. The translators favored a literary style already archaic in 1611; as Shakespeare was nearing retirement from theater,[4] especially in later works, he conjured a language that, as Frank Kermode demonstrated, would have been nearly incomprehensible to his listeners on a first hearing.[5] This catalogue of variances could be multiplied.

Precisely because the corpora were produced independently of each other and at first blush seem so opposite in character and substance, the points of similarity between Shakespeare and the King James Bible become fascinating. Both corpora were created, not for scholars, but rather for popular audiences. The groundlings at the Globe regularly attended Sunday services, or at least were expected to; it was for them that the king's translators toiled. The record of Shakespeare's attendance of holy services is nil; nevertheless, he knew his audience and depended on its religious assumptions to lead his customers dramatically where he wanted them to follow.[6] Moreover, his poetry's resonance with the Geneva Bible (in some admixture with the Great Bible and Bishops' Bible) proves Shakespeare's pilfering of Holy Writ and its ideas.[7] By express acknowledgment the king's translators depended heavily on the matter and techniques of their predecessors, especially Tyndale's extraordinary rendering of the New Testament (1526).[8] So also Shakespeare drank deeply from the well of rhetorical practice incorporated in the curriculum of Elizabethan schools[9] and, in accordance with the fashion of his day, cribbed most of his plots and characters from a motley mess of Homer, Ovid, Plutarch, and Holinshed's *Chronicles*. Shakespeare corresponds to what Peter Ackroyd denotes as "the English archetype; he seems most original when he borrows most freely."[10] Shakespeare exhibited, without expressing, Miles Smith's representation of his fellow translators' concern: "not to make of a bad [resource] a good one, … but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one."[11] For their part the Jacobean companies exercised greater freedom in translation than their self-imposed mandate might lead one to expect.[12] Still, both they and Shakespeare served at their monarch's pleasure, under his edicts. Certainly the king's translators had neither license nor disposition to proceed otherwise. Neither could Shakespeare. Operating as a patented shareholder of the King's Men, the country's finest theatrical troupe, Shakespeare was obligated to write a specific number of plays per annum, for which he did not hold the copyright: his works were the property of the king's company, of which he was a member.[13] Artistically

Shakespeare was both restricted and enriched: he tailored leading roles to the talents of Richard Burbage and comedic parts to clowns like Robert Armin, much as Duke Ellington later orchestrated his compositions by studying Johnny Hodges, Cootie Williams, and every other "man in the orchestra and [found] out what he can do best, and what he would like to do."[14] The critical point to remember is that Shakespeare was as bound to others—politically, professionally, artistically—as were the king's translators. Genius strikes fire within social networks, however much it may in turn sear them.

Language glues human society. Across four centuries, directly or indirectly, Shakespeare's works and the King James Bible have knitted us together. As a convenient means of pondering this phenomenon, I shall concentrate on specimens of both corpora: *King Lear* and the book of Job. Reference to both has become commonplace in considerations of theodicy and human suffering. I am in no way concerned to build a case for literary dependence in either direction.[15] My interest lies in the peculiar ways these works use language to create, dissolve, and reconstitute their listeners' social and religious imaginations.[16] *Lear* was first performed at Whitehall on Saint Stephen's Night, December 26, 1606.[17] While Job's origin is shrouded in late centuries before the Common Era, the version embedded in the thought and speech of most English-speaking moderns derives from the King James Bible. Apart from their protagonists' intense turmoil and the folktales' rudimentary framework, replete with a trio of friends or daughters, Job and *Lear* are very different. Job is a sonata for dissonant voices on the adequacy of the sapiential truism that vice is punished and virtue rewarded. *Lear* is Shakespeare's only tragedy that entwines a pair of plots (Lear and his daughters; Gloucester and his sons). Job's characters differ only in broad strokes: the Lord God and Satan, the plaintiff Job and his nearly interchangeable interlocutors. Each of these characters exists to convey a point of view clashing against another; none save Job, who finally "repent[s] in dust and ashes" (42:6),[18] demonstrates that development, witnessed toward the play's end, in Lear the king and even in the bastard Edmund (4.7.60; 5.3.241–244). Eventually in Job, God speaks; in *Lear*, set in a polytheistic world, the gods—Jupiter, Juno, Hecate—are silent while mortals occasionally speak of or to them (1.1.111, 161, 179; 2.1.45; 2.2.211; 3.2.49; 4.6.34). Job ends with multiplied restoration of wealth and children (42:10–17); *Lear*, with the old king dead beside three dead daughters: one poisoned, the second a suicide, the third hanged (5.3.239–240, 250–253, 304–309).

2

Marching their separate ways, however, these works rhyme each other in ways I find fascinating. To begin with, both Job and *Lear* are highly poetic, sophisticated enlargements of primitive tales, fresh reconsiderations that almost immediately attracted important interpretive accretions. Long before the king's translators laid a finger to Job, its discourses appear to have extruded the folktale recounted in chapters 1 and 2 and the closing verses (7–17) of chapter 42.[19] While the declamations of Job and his friends do not trace a straight line of logical development, as do Plato's *Dialogues*, they state themes and variations, with *dimenuendi* and *crescendi*, like a Bach fugue.[20] The hymn to wisdom in chapter 28 may have been a later interlamination or, alternatively, the author's own jarring incorporation into the discourse. The same seems true of Elihu's speech (33:1–37:24). Other patches of the text notoriously hobble sense (e.g., 22:29–30; 24:18–24; 26:1–27:23), with which the king's translators and their successors had to cope.

The same phenomena we find in *Lear*, also based on an older tale that Shakespeare probably knew in different versions: Leir of Britain in Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* (ca. 1135), Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1587), Higgins's additions to *The Mirror for Magistrates* (1574).[21] The text of the play (most significantly at 3.1.17–39; 5.3.102–15) in its First Quarto (1608) and First Folio editions (1623) is seriously disturbed.[22] Nahum Tate famously, or infamously, gave *Lear* a happy ending (with Cordelia's marriage to Edgar), used in staging the play from 1681 until 1838.[23]

My reason for rehearsing these condensed tradition histories is to point up the complex web of social transactions and translations that have occurred before, within, and since the composition of both books. The lives of these texts are themselves expressions of the grounding and slippage of language within society, a matter with which both books are deeply preoccupied.[24]

3

> [God] destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.
> If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.
> (Job 9:22b–23)

> As flies to wanton boys are we to th' gods,
> They kill us for their sport. (*King Lear* 4.1.38–39)

Both Job and *Lear* pose painful questions about society's unraveling and humanity's expulsion into the terrible wonders of the natural world. To acknowledge this is to recognize that these texts have not merely undergone different kinds of *linguistic* translation. At a fundamental level their characters endure profound *social* translations, challenging audiences to make sense of radically transposed sensibilities. For our purpose a few examples must suffice. Although the prologue of Job has been derided for a theological naïveté exploded by the discourses that follow, the crux of the deal cut by God and Satan pervades the rest of the book. The Lord is certain that his servant Job is "a perfect and upright man," expressed in social relations: one who "escheweth evil" and "still holdeth fast his integrity" (1:8; 2:3). Satan wagers that such integrity runs no deeper than the hedges protecting him (1:10). Knock out all of his social props—his assets, entourage, family, finally "skin for skin" (2:4)—and, Satan bets, "he will curse thee to thy face" (1:11; 2:5): the ultimate divorce between a person and God.

Across the next forty chapters Job and his interlocutors erect, then demolish one social construct after another: the goodness of life versus a "soul [that] chooseth strangling, *and* death rather than my life; I loathe *it*" (7:15–16a; also 3:11); trouble's inevitability "as the sparks fly upward" (5:7) versus "the arrows of the Almighty" and "the terrors of God" (6:4); assurance of divine upholding of justice (8:20) versus a God who "will laugh at the trial of the innocent" (9:23). The triadic series of debates between Job and his friends are but a semblance of conversation; between them there is little social intercourse, as they typically talk past each other (5:17–27/6:1–13; 11:13–20/12:1–25; 18:5–21/19:1–12). In chapters 29–31 Job reminisces of "months past" (29:2), when "[u]nto me *men* gave ear, and waited" (29:21), laments their current derision (30:1–15), and asserts his desire to "be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity" (31:6), "*that* the Almighty would answer me, and *that* mine adversary had written a book" (31:35; see also 23:1–27). Job wants a court trial and he wants it now, because he knows himself in the right and God in the wrong. Elihu states this (35:2) while effectively laying the groundwork for the answer from the whirlwind (35:5–11; 36:24–37:13). The steel hoops encircling plaintiff and defendant have not snapped: says Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (13:15a); God replies, "I will demand of thee, and answer thou me" (38:3b). Unbound by society's mores, God overwhelms Job by aligning himself with nature unfathomable: songs of the morning stars (38:7), seas swaddled in thick darkness

(38:9), prey for the lion and food for the raven (38:39, 41), birthing goats (39:1–4) and scornful peacocks (39:13–18), behemoth (40:15–24) and leviathan (41:1–34). All things, and more, God restores to Job, though not before the man of Uz confesses that his eye has now seen what hitherto only his ear had heard—and that he, Job, had not known what he was talking about (42:2–5).

Regarded socially, Lear's tragedy is precipitated by his ridiculous attempt to divide the indivisible: to retire from power without abdication (1.1.35–50).[25] That way lies first schizophrenia—"Who is it," he soon asks, "that can tell me who I am?" (1.4.221)—then total madness, which Lear evokes on the storm-blasted heath (3.2). Both Job and Lear are exposed to themselves in a cyclone, an apocalyptic "crack [of] nature's moulds" (3.2.8).[26] Both are flung into the natural world of "unaccommodated man … no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal" (3.4.105–106) that "eats cow-dung for salads; swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog" (3.4.127–128) and dies with less breath than that of "a dog, a horse, a rat" (5.3.305; cf. Job 4:10–11; 6:15–18, 26). Likewise Edmund's dupes, his father Gloucester and brother Edgar: branded as traitors, "a credulous father and a brother noble" (1.2.177) end up staggered at Dover Cliff, the one grossly maimed, the other Poor Tom O'Bedlam (4.6). Nature is Edmund's goddess (1.2.1); this unaccommodated man revels in society's unraveling, to whatever he "can fashion fit" (1.2.182). Unlike in Job, nature in *Lear* affords little restorative vision. From Lear's perspective, beneath the waist "there's hell, there's darkness, there is the sulphurous pit, burning, scalding, stench, consumption!" (4.6.123–125). The hand that would be kissed should first be wiped; "it smells of mortality" (4.6.129) in a world red in tooth and claw:

> When we are born we cry that we are come
> To this great stage of fools. …
> Then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill! (4.6.178–179, 183; cf. Job 3:11)

Lear's world is that of a "hog in sloth, fox in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey" (3.4.91–92); Goneril alone is "the sea-monster" (1.4.253) and "detested kite" (1.4.254), with "a serpent's tooth" (1.4.280) and "wolfish visage" (1.4.300). To his vicious wife, Albany comments:

> Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
> Like monsters of the deep. (4.2.50–51)

Rare, bleak glimpses of clarity for unaccommodated humanity open possibilities for compassion:

> Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
> That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm, …
> [Undefended by] houseless heads and unfed sides. (3.4.28–30)
> Come, let's away to prison;
> We too alone will sing like birds i'the cage. (5.3.8–9)

4

> Thou shalt not sigh, nor hold thy stumps to heaven,
> Nor wink, nor nod, nor kneel, nor make a sign,
> But I of these will wrest an alphabet
> And by still practice learn to know thy meaning.[27]

Religiously and politically Jacobean society was highly unstable;[28] it is easy to imagine hardscrabble Christian playgoers keenly responsive to an all-powerful king and an utterly righteous commoner stripped of everything they had. But Job and *Lear* would do more than console audiences with familiar fables; their translators appalled the same listeners with fractured words in worlds of fractured meaning. Both works use language stretched to the breaking point for revealing layered cultures broken and undermined.[29] Of this *Lear*'s opening scene offers a fine illustration: repeatedly the king commands his daughters, "Speak" (1.1.54, 68, 86, 90), during a state ritual most impertinent for genuine declaration of a daughter's love.[30] The gullible reward of Goneril and Regan's chilled smoothness (1.1.55–76), their mettle turned to metal (1.1.69),[31] is matched by undammed fury at Cordelia's bonded "nothing" (1.1.87–89). "Nothing" unleashes the old dragon's wrath (1.1.123), soon directed against his trustworthy, rude confidant:

> be Kent unmannerly
> When Lear is mad. What wouldst thou do, old man? (1.1.146–147)

As a flattering façade is plastered over truth, the state crumbles fast. Progressively Lear's Fool distends word and sense (1.5.31–36, 43–45):[32]

> LEAR: Be my horses ready?
> FOOL: Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.

> LEAR: Because they are not eight.
> FOOL: Yes indeed, thou wouldst make a good fool. …
> LEAR: O let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven! I would not be mad.
> Keep me in temper, I would not be mad.

Madness, though, is Lear's destination. At its nadir his speech is scrambled beyond intelligibility:

> No, they cannot touch me for coining. I am the King himself. … Nature's above art in that respect. There's your press-money. That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper: draw me a clothier's yard. Look, look, a mouse: peace, peace, this piece of toasted cheese will do't. There's my gauntlet, I'll prove it on a giant. Bring up the brown bills. O well flown, bird, i'the clout, i'the clout! Hewgh! Give the word. (4.6.83–92)[33]

Are there analogues for this verbal spinning and tottering in the King James Job? Yes, as a few examples may prove.[34] (a) Among the book's most famous euphemisms is *bārak*, "bless," for its inversion: "*curse* God, and die" (2:9; also 1:11; 2:5). (b) One is hard pressed to imagine a more perfect Englishing of 5:7 than: "Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward [*ûběnê-rešep yagbîhû ʿûp*]."[35] Nor can the King James Version of 10:10 be bettered: "Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?" (with Kent's contextually offensive pronoun "thou").[36] (c) While English is incapable of playing the pun *tiqwâ* ("thread"/"hope"), "My days are faster than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope," approximates the running-stop cadence of 7:6 in Hebrew. (d) Faithful to the Hebrew, the translators' rendition of 7:17 preserves its acidic parody of Ps 8:4: seized by overwhelming anguish, puny man feels prey to a mysteriously stalking and wolfish God. (e) Though the meaning of the last stich in Job 15:30 eludes everyone (*wĕyāsûr bĕrûaḥ pîw*), "and by the breath of his mouth shall he go away" whispers human evanescence. (f) Guided by poetry, not orthodontics, the king's translators bequeathed to us an escape "with the skin of my teeth" (19:20).[37]

Ultimately, in Job as in *Lear*, speech seems to collapse with its speaker. "I was at ease, but [God] hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken me by the neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark. His archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground. He breaketh me with breach upon breach" (Job 16:12–14a). Caroline Spurgeon could well have been speaking of Job's grotesque abuse:

> there runs throughout only one overpowering and dominating continuous image … [:] the general "floating" image kept constantly before us, chiefly by means of the verbs used, but also in metaphor, of a human body in anguished movement, tugged, wrenched, beaten, pierced, stung, scourged, dislocated, flayed, gashed, scalded, tortured, and finally broken on the rack.[38]

Spurgeon spoke not of Job. She was referring to *King Lear*. And as the body goes, so goes the mind. Job 24:18–25; 26:5–14; and 27:8–23 are notoriously troublesome: though placed on the lips of Job, they iterate the friends' point of view. Some commentators rearrange the speeches of Bildad and Zophar,[39] though there is no textual warrant for that expedience (as reflected in the KJV). Carol Newsom has suggested the alternative of "a perception and a language that verge on madness," which, if accepted, would align the character of Job even more closely to that of Lear:

> Though Job ostensibly says only the most conventional words, his contextualization of them shows that he has constructed an unstable and shifting set of equivalences and oppositions. What should be is the opposite of what is, yet he speaks as though all were as it should be. … In such a "Wonderland" world, Job speaks the only speech possible—an insanely inverted speech in which everything shadows and gestures to its opposite and in which one naturally swears by one's betrayer.[40]

"How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?" (Job 19:2). "Hark in thine ear: change places and handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief?" (*Lear* 4.6.148–150).

5

> Bless thee, Bottom, bless thee! Thou art translated![41]

> God's hand is in every translation; and his hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again, for that library where every book shall lie open to one another.[42]

George Steiner identified four phases in every act of translation: a leaning into the text, a cognitive invasion, a withdrawal with meaning heavy-laden, and a compensatory restoration of balance.[43] Shakespeare achieved this with his sources in 1606; the king's translators did so with theirs in 1611. Had they not succeeded, their works would not be so deeply embedded

in our consciousness as they are. I would gloss Steiner's analysis at three points. First, it aptly describes not only the carriage of literature from one language to another, but more fundamentally humanity's lifelong translation of nonsense into sense and its ambient sensibility. With Job and Lear the righteous and foolish of every generation lean into turmoil and diminution before withdrawing from the verge to find their footing. Second, so exquisitely did the King's Men of the early seventeenth century do their jobs that they have colonized our imagination: the conceptual home from which we depart and to which we return is scaffolded by the Bible of 1611 and the Folio of 1623. If English is our native or adopted tongue, we can no more escape either corpus than we can outjump our own shadows. Third, Steiner's final stage—put simply, *le mot juste*—is forever an approximation at best, never an equivalence; in life as in letters there is always a gap between the experience and its articulation, that which "we feel, not what we ought to say" (*Lear* 5.3.323). Writ large, that is the reason the endings of Job and *Lear* irritate us so; writ even larger, that is why our lives frustrate us, particularly as we near our ends. Job's last words are: "I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes" (42:6). Why? What has he learned? Lear's last words are: "Look there, look there!" (5.3.309). Why? What should we see? The ingrained paradox of the King James Bible and Shakespearean poetry is a feeling of "at-homeness"[44] in a universe, quickened by faith and by love, that is irreducibly strange and often frightening. These works demand of us lived answers: "When the globe torques toward torturous imbecility, will you, in spite of everything, reach beyond yourself and dare dedicate yourself to another, even to the Other?" For that question, among others, these are works, as Ben Jonson recognized, "not of an age, but for all time."[45]

Notes

1. Rudyard Kipling's whimsical conceit ("Proofs of Holy Writ" [1932], republished in *Mrs Bathurst and Other Stories* [ed. John Beyley and Lisa Lewis; World's Classics; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991], 251–63) that Miles Smith sought Shakespeare's assistance in rendering the book of Ezekiel is "improbable [though] certainly not impossible" (Stephen Prickett, "Language within Language: The King James Steamroller," in *The King James Bible after 400 Years: Literary, Linguistic, and Cultural Influences* [ed. Hannibal Hamlin and Norman W. Jones; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010], 36).

2. Helen Gardner, *Religion and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 61–89; Hugh Gazzard, "An Act to Restrain Abuses of Players (1606)," *Review of English Studies* 61 (2010): 495–528.

3. Recent surveys include David Norton, *A History of the English Bible as Literature* (2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1:139–61; Alister McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 2001); Adam Nicolson, *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003).

4. S. Schoenbaum, *William Shakespeare: A Compact Documentary Life* (rev. ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 278–319.

5. On the King James Bible's deliberate archaisms (e.g., "hath" and "sayeth" for "has" and "says"), see McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 265–76; on the idiosyncratic obscurity of later Shakespeare, see Frank Kermode, *Shakespeare's Language* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2000), 3–17. An example from *Coriolanus* (4.8.45–49) illustrates the point: "but one of these / (As he hath spices of them all, not all, / For I dare so far free him) made him fear'd, / So hated, and so banish'd; but he has a merit / To choke it in the utt'rance."

6. Whether Shakespeare "died a papist" (Richard Davies) or "a tolerant Anglican" (Schoenbaum, *William Shakespeare*, 61) remains as controversial as it is probably irresolvable. For a perceptive assessment of the plays' religious elusiveness, consult A. D. Nuttall, *Shakespeare the Thinker* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 16–21. Balanced accounts of Catholic and Protestant pressures during the playwright's era are offered by Peter Milward, *Shakespeare's Religious Background* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973); and, in briefer compass, Huston Diehl, "Religion and Shakespearean Tragedy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Tragedy* (ed. Claire McEachern; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 86–102.

7. Richmond Noble, *Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge and Use of the Book of Common Prayer* (London: S.P.C.K., 1953); Naseeb Shaheen, *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Plays* (Newark, Del.: University of Delaware Press, 1999).

8. David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 113–450; idem, *William Tyndale: A Biography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).

9. Miriam Joseph, *Shakespeare's Use of the Arts of Language* (1947; repr., Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2005). In George Kennedy's judgment, "[Shakespeare's] works are in a very concrete way perhaps the greatest achievements of classical rhetoric" (*Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980], 213). If so, it is a fine irony that the speeches of Brutus and Antony in *Julius Caesar* (3.2) constitute exhibit A in the case *against* rhetoric, owing to its easy manipulation of popular emotion.

10. Peter Ackroyd, *Albion: The Origins of the English Imagination* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2002), 222.

11. "The Translators to the Reader," *The Reader's Bible, Being the Authorized Version of the Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha Translated out of the Original Tongues* (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), xxvi.

12. Even though the six translation companies were directed to adhere to the Bishops' Bible, "as little altered as the Truth of the Originall will permitt," only 8 percent of its phraseology found its way into the KJV. While different critics acknowledge varying degrees of "beauty" in the version, most concur on its basic clarity: Norton,

History of the English Bible, 1:158–61; McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 253–56; Nicolson, *God's Secretaries*, 198–215; Prickett, "Language within Language," 42. Such an assessment harks back to Matthew Arnold: "[There is] an English book and one only, where, as in the *Iliad* itself, perfect plainness of speech is allied with perfect nobleness; and that book is the Bible" (*On Translating Homer* [London: Smith, Elder, 1896], 89).

13. See G. E. Bentley, "Shakespeare, the King's Company, and *King Lear*," in *On King Lear* (ed. Lawrence Danson; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 47–60.

14. In 1942 Ellington wrote: "I regard my entire orchestra as one large instrument, and I try to play on that instrument to the fullest of its capabilities. My aim is and always has been to mold the music around the man" (quoted in Gary Giddins, *Visions of Jazz: The First Century* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998], 104).

15. For Kenneth Muir, "There is no doubt that Job was much in Shakespeare's mind when he was writing *King Lear*" (*King Lear: Critical Essays* [New York: Garland, 1984], 289); cf. John Holloway, "King Lear," in *Shakespeare: King Lear: A Casebook* [ed. Frank Kermode; rev. ed.; Houndmills, UK: Macmillan, 1992], 176–97). Yet it is curious that this very long play neither quotes nor unquestionably alludes to anything in that very long biblical book. "I such a fellow saw, / Which made me think a man a worm" (4.1.34–35) may echo Job 17:14, though Gloucester's comment—if biblically allusive at all—could as easily refer to Ps 22:6. The clearest resonance with Job (7:6) is in (of all things) *The Merry Wives of Windsor* 5.1.20–21: "I know also life is a shuttle." *Lear*'s nearest biblical paraphrase is of Luke 2:49: "O dear Father, / It is thy business that I go about" (4.4.23–24).

16. A good reason to consider Job is that the efforts of the king's translators may be examined on their merits: they could not rely upon Tyndale. For an interesting analysis that emphasizes other aspects of these works than I consider, consult Steven Marx, *Shakespeare and the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 59–78.

17. R. A. Foakes, ed., *King Lear* (Arden Shakespeare; London: Nelson, 1997), 4–5. All quotations from the play refer to this Arden critical edition.

18. Here and throughout, unless otherwise indicated, all translations are from the KJV in Everyman's Library 175 (New York: Knopf, 1996).

19. See, e.g., Normal C. Habel, *The Book of Job: A Commentary* (Old Testament Library; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985), 25–42.

20. In *Job the Silent: A Study in Historical Counterpoint* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 175–79, Bruce Zuckerman applies to Job the metaphor of the fugue to make a point different from my own.

21. These are only representative; for detailed discussion consult Kenneth Muir, *The Sources of Shakespeare's Plays* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 202–6.

22. See the analysis in Foakes, *King Lear*, 110–28, 393–402.

23. Tate's "Dedication and Prologue" to his version of King Lear ("a Heap of Jewels, unstrung, and unpolisht") is conveniently available in Kermode, *Shakespeare: King Lear*, 25–26.

24. J. L. Murphy: "Like Job, King Lear is part of this Wisdom Literature tradition. … Tragedy is Wisdom Literature dramatized" (*Darkness and Devils: Exorcism and King Lear* [Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1984], 213). It is interesting that Carol Newsom concludes her recent monograph with Job's "imaginary theater

production" on "a semidarkened stage" (*The Book of Job: A Contest of Moral Imaginations* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003], 259, 260).

25. "The [king's] body natural is the lesser, and with this the body politic is consolidated. So that … he has not a body natural distinct and divided by itself from the office and dignity royal, but a body natural and a body politic together indivisible, and these two bodies are incorporated in one person" (*The All-England Law Reports: Reprint 1558–1774* [ed. G. F. L. Bridgman; rev. M. R. Plummer; 38 vols.; London: Butterworth, 1968], 1:148, cited in Foakes, *King Lear*, 18).

26. Joseph Wittereich, "'Image of Horror': The Apocalypse in *King Lear*," in *The Apocalypse in English Renaissance Thought and Literature* (ed. C. A. Patrides and Joseph Wittereich; Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 175–206.

27. *Titus Andronicus* 3.2.42–45, in *The Norton Shakespeare Based on the Oxford Edition* (ed. Stephen Greenblatt et al.; 2nd ed.; New York: Norton, 2008).

28. Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400–1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

29. Maynard Mack: "*King Lear* … [is] the greatest anti-pastoral ever penned" (*Everybody's Shakespeare: Reflections Chiefly on the Tragedies* [Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993], 166).

30. Lawrence Danson, *Tragic Alphabet: Shakespeare's Drama of Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 163–68.

31. Well does John Hughes speak of Goneril, Regan, and (originally) Lear's "commodification of love": "The Politics of Forgiveness: A Theological Exploration of *King Lear*," *Modern Theology* 17 (2001): 261–87.

32. An insightful consideration of the Fool's role as "the consciousness of a split society[, …] a twin-headed monster at strife with itself," is John F. Danby, "The Fool and the Handy-Dandy," in *Shakespeare: Modern Essays in Criticism* (ed. Leonard F. Dean; rev. ed.; London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 377–88 (quotation, 387).

33. Theodore Weiss: "Shakespeare, at the threshold of the modern world, in *Hamlet* and *King Lear* provides the boldest, most searching examination of that world's most fundamental dilemma: the falling apart of thing and thought, thought and feeling"("As the Wind Sits: The Poetics of *King Lear*," in Danson, *On King Lear*, 61–90, quotation 87).

34. For discussion of "The Language and Style of Job," consult Robert Gordis, *The Book of God and Man: A Study of Job* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 157–68.

35. Alternatively, one may translate this verse, "Man, indeed, is born for trouble, / And Resheph's sons wing high" (Marvin Pope, *Job* [3rd ed.; Anchor Bible 15; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1973], 40). For me the reference to a Northwest Semitic god makes little sense in the context of Job 7.

36. In Early Modern English "you" was the typical mode of address within upper classes talking to each other; "thou" could be used among lower classes talking to each other, by superiors to their inferiors, in cases of special intimacy or insult. "So, in a scene, when someone deviates from this normal pattern, it always means something—usually a change of attitude, or a new emotion or mood" (David Crystal and Ben Crystal, *The Shakespeare Miscella*ny [Woodstock, N.Y.: Overlook/Peter Mayer, 2005], 13).

37. Pope's translation, "My teeth drop from my gums" (*Job*, 139), makes equally good sense of an obscure Hebrew clause, though his dismissiveness of the KJV's poetry seems unwarranted. Since teeth have no skin, an escape with such is no escape at all—and that seems the point.

38. Caroline Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), 338–39.

39. Thus Gordis, *Book of God and Man*, 268–77; Pope, *Job*, xix–xx, 174–96.

40. Newsom, *Book of Job*, 167–68.

41. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* 3.1.105, in Greenblatt et al., *Norton Shakespeare Based on Oxford*.

42. John Donne, "Meditation XVII," in *John Donne: Selections from Divine Poems, Sermons, Devotions, and Prayers* (ed. John Booty; Classics of Western Spirituality; New York: Paulist Press, 1990), 271.

43. George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), 296–301.

44. For this apt description of the KJV I am indebted to Steiner, *After Babel*, 348.

45. Stephen Greenblatt, "The Dream of the Master Text," in Greenblatt et al., *Norton Shakespeare Based on Oxford*, 67.

The Word and the Words: Andrewes, Donne, and the Theology of Translation

Malcolm Guite

The aim of this paper is to explore a little of the theological framework that lies behind the effort of translation and also to show the way in which the act of translation itself became a key theological metaphor, a way of understanding and unpacking the truth that the translators believed was at the heart of the words with which they were working. In particular I want to look at what Lancelot Andrewes, whose name headed the list of translators, was thinking and saying about translation in the midst of his work on the KJV, and also at the way his younger contemporary John Donne developed some of his ideas after the KJV was published.

Bishop Buckeridge said of Lancelot Andrewes at the translator's funeral in 1626 that he knew and loved so many languages that "he could have served as interpreter general at the confusion of tongues!"[1] It is a great hyperbolic compliment, in the style of the period, but it also alludes, as we shall see, to a biblical episode, one might say a biblical emblem, that is crucial to the whole enterprise of the 1611 translation. Andrewes was the *Stella Praedicantium*, the great star of the Jacobean pulpit, as Henry Isaacson, his amanuensis and first biographer, says of him:

> Of the fruit of this his seed-time, the world, especially this land, hath reaped a plentiful harvest in his sermons and his writings: never went any beyond him in the first of these, his preaching, wherein he had such a dexterity, that some would say of him, that he was quick again as soon as delivered; and in this faculty he hath left a pattern unimitable. So that he was truly styled, *Stella Praedicantium*, and "an angel in the pulpit."[2]

He assisted at James's coronation and in 1604 took part in the Hampton Court conference. Andrewes's name is the first on the list of divines

appointed to compile the King James Version of the Bible. He headed the "First Westminster Company," which took charge of the first books of the Old Testament (Genesis–2 Kings). He acted as a sort of general editor for the project as well.

For Andrewes, preaching and translation went hand in hand and every one of his sermons before, during, and after his work on the KJV involves a multiple series of translations. As we shall see, he is never content to give his text in one language or to give it only one rendering into the English tongue. Since we have his sermons, sermons extending right through the period the translation was made, and also the period of its gradual reception, we have a chance to glimpse into the mind of a leading figure and see if we can determine some of the theological underpinnings that went into this great project. It is particularly significant that we have the sermons he preached on the feast of Pentecost and specifically those sermons that deal with the "gift" of translation into many tongues that was the "miracle" of that day, since it is in these sermons that Andrewes speaks of the meaning, manner, and purpose of translation and reflects on the relation more generally between meaning and expression.

A good place to begin is with this allusion by Buckeridge to the story of the tower of Babel, the "confusion of tongues," and in particular to consider the commonly received idea, derived from Augustine among others, that the "confusion of tongues," the judgment of God in the Old Testament, is in some sense answered, even reversed, by the miracle of Pentecost, a mercy of God in the New Testament.

So for the generation who worked on the King James translation of the Bible, Pentecost was the divine blessing that undid forever the curse of Babel, and they dwelt on the strange parallels and antitheses between the two stories. The tower of Babel presents us with an image of arrogant human power, monoglot, monocultural, triumphing in and satisfied with its own works. For Protestant reformers there were obvious parallels to be drawn with the hegemony of the Roman Church and the enforced monopoly of the Vulgate version of the Bible, though in our own time we might catch a glimpse in that same story of a triumphalist technology stamping its uniform logo on everything.

God's response to Babel is not only to break the tower, but also to break the linguistic monopoly, and to scatter abroad into the world thousands of unique languages each with its own ways of imagining and describing the world. Indeed, the plurality of tongues that in the Old Testament constituted a curse came to be seen by men like Andrewes, from a

New Testament perspective, as a blessing in disguise. Andrewes saw that the miracle of Pentecost was not so much a simple reversal of the "confusion of tongues" as redemption, even a sanctification of the multiplicity of tongues that began there. It is not the case that God enables all to hear the divine word in Classical Hebrew, therefore implying that there was only a single sacred language, but rather that the division of tongues, the multiplicity of language, becomes itself an occasion and a cause for praise. For the generation who were concerned with the essentially "Pentecostal" act of translation, reflection on the meaning of this feast, and therefore on the nature and significance of translation, was essential.

Among the sixteen surviving sermons by Andrewes on Pentecost preached between 1606 and 1622, we have two sermons on the crucial text in Acts 2:1–11, and specifically focusing on verses 3 and 4, which describe the gift of tongues:

> 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.
> 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

One of these sermons is from 1606 and the other from 1608. This means they were preached when he was in the midst of his work as both translator and editor. Furthermore they were preached at court to a congregation who were fully aware of, and many of them involved in, the great project that had begun at Hampton Court two years before the first of these sermons, and was completed three years after the second.

Andrewes, Pentecost, and the Celebration of Many Tongues

In the opening exordium of his 1606 sermon Andrewes says that the sending of the Holy Spirit was "a benefit so great and so wonderful as there were not tongues enough on earth to celebrate it."[3] Clearly Andrewes is playing on "tongues" here, as the translators were to do later, suggesting that there are "not tongues enough" to praise in the sense that there are not enough individual people whose tongues sing and praise to adequately celebrate the miracle, but also of course to mean that there were not tongues enough in terms of tongue as "language." For all the languages in the world there is still not a sufficient variety of language to celebrate God's praise. So from the outset Andrewes is on the side of multiplicity or variety, of a

multilingual, multivocal response to the mystery of the gospel, rather than a uniform or monoglot response that privileges one tongue over another.

Later on in the sermon he makes this even more explicit: "This was a special favour from God for all the propagation of his gospel far and wide this division of tongues."[4] What did Andrewes mean by "this division of tongues"? In the first instance he means that when Peter and the other apostles spoke the one message in one tongue, their own mother tongue, the same message was divided and given into each of the many mother tongues in which people heard it that day; it was divided between tongues and yet remained undiminished and fully itself as it was received in each tongue, like the bread divided, broken, and shared—multiplied and not diminished, as in the feeding of the five thousand.

However, he is also alluding to the image in Acts that there had appeared "cloven tongues like as of fire." And elsewhere in the sermon he makes a distinction between a true and false "division" or "cleaving" of tongues:

> *The best*, if it be of God's cleaving; if it be of his lighting with the fire of Heaven. … The worst if it comes from the devil's hands. … And he has the art of cleaving. He showed it in the beginning when he made the serpent *a forked tongue*, to speak what was contrary to his knowledge and meaning—that they should not die, and as he did the serpent's, so he can do [to] others.[5]

By contrast there is God's cleaving:

> *Tongues* and *cloven tongues*. And that cleaving of right necessary use to the business intended. For that of theirs was but the one whole entire tongue that could speak but one poor language, the Syriac that they were bred in. There was not a cleft in it. So could they speak their mind to none but Syrians; and by that means should the Gospel have been shut up in one corner of the world. … To the end then this great good of the knowledge of the gospel might be dispersed … even to every nation under heaven—to that end clove He their tongues; to make many tongues in one tongue.[6]

There is then the demonic cloven tongue, in which the devil, the father of lies, speaks, where the division is between word and meaning; the devil says one thing with his cloven tongue and means another in his heart, and so he tempts and deceives humankind. But there is a heavenly fire to answer the hellish one and a heavenly cloven tongue. And whereas the

demonic cleaving is to mean one thing and say its contrary, in the heavenly cleaving the meaning remains whole but its expression becomes divided. There is one truth that can be spoken and respoken in many ways; and so in a paradox multiplied, there is one true meaning and yet still many tongues in which and through which it may be expressed and celebrated. He even goes on to assert that the division of tongues in which the one gospel can be delivered in more than one language is patterned into Scripture itself since the "original" out of which the Bible is translated is itself in more than one tongue, in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

Turning now to a passage from the sermon in 1608, a little closer to the completion of the great translation, Andrewes is developing this notion of plurality and multiplicity of tongues and voices even further. By this time he will of course have been trying, in his editorial role, to draw together and harmonize the various efforts and different approaches of the members of his "companie" of translators, working on the Old Testament, and in part this may be behind his reflections on the "concert of many instruments." It is also in this sermon that he reflects on the way the division of tongues at Pentecost is a redemption or sanctification of the confusion of tongues at Babel:

> And so by speaking all tongues they have gathered a church that speaks all tongues; a thing much tending to the glory of God. For being now converted to Christ they send up daily to heaven so many tongues, there to praise his name, as he this day sent down to earth to convert them with all to his truth. And indeed it was not meet one Tongue only should be employed that way … but that all tongues should do it; which as a concert of many instruments might yield a full harmony. In which we behold the mighty work of God, that the same means of several tongues, which was the destroying of Babel, the very same is here made to work the building of Zion.[7]

A number of things are important to emphasize here. When Andrewes says it was "not meet one tongue should do it," but that all tongues should do it, he is of course delicately alluding to Phil 2:11, "that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord," but he is also reflecting on the way the richness and diversity of every language is essential if we are to come close to praising "the mighty work of God." He had already reflected, as we have seen, on the way the Bible itself was written in more than one tongue, but now he goes further, and this emphasis on "all tongues" in fact reflects his own practice as a preacher.

One consequence of this notion of meaning arising from "the consort of many instruments" is Andrewes's own technique in preaching of deploying many languages, constantly crossing and recrossing between them, making points that can only be found in and through their plurality. His sermons consist of a series of translations and retranslations, often involving wordplays and puns across languages, all emphasizing the way meaning leaps across the "cleave," the divide, in our tongues. Take, for example, this part of his extended reflection on the word *Emmanuel* in the famous Christmas sermon of 1614 where he translates Hebrew into both Latin and English and then puns across all three languages:

> And now to look into the name. It is compounded and to be taken in pieces … *El* is God … by that name we take our first notice that this child is God. … For the other *Emmanu* does more concern us; … *anu,* we, poor we, *Em*, which is *cum,* and that *cum* in the midst between *nobis* and Deus, God and us—to couple God and us. … We need no more: *Emmanu-el* and *Emmanu-all.* All that we can desire is for us to be with Him, with God, and He to be with us.[8]

So when God comes to our aid at Pentecost and undoes the confusion of Babel, God does so not by eliminating all the different languages and restoring a single tongue, but by honoring and gracing every language with his meaning by allowing himself and the gospel to be translated into each and every language. After Pentecost there is to be no master tongue, no master race, no political or cultural privilege for one language over another, but the gospel is to make its home in every nation under heaven so that we can hear the mysteries that angels longed to hear, "in our own tongue wherein we were born" (Acts 2:8).

Christmas in the Light of Pentecost

The Feast of Pentecost has been rightly called the birthday of the church, but it could also be called the Feast of Translation. Indeed, for Andrewes, translation, in all the deepest senses of that term, goes right to the heart of the Christian gospel. His Pentecost sermons cover the whole range of the Spirit's involvement in the creation and salvation stories and in the history of the church: the Holy Spirit is there at the beginning of creation as God breathes upon the waters, and there at the beginning of salvation as Mary is filled with the Holy Spirit and conceives Christ, and there at the beginning of the new creation as, "by the Power of the Holy Spirit," God

raises Christ from the dead. But on Pentecost we celebrate that special gift of the Spirit without which we could not understand or proclaim these other mysteries; the gift of tongues, of expression, of understanding; and at the heart of these gifts is the gift of translation.

For Andrewes, though, the key to this central affirmation of translation is to be found as much in his understanding of Christ as Logos as it is to be found in his theology of the Spirit. This is especially true of his understanding of what it means to say "The Word was made flesh."

In a profound way Andrewes understands the incarnation as itself a prime and divinely sanctioned act of translation, an act of translation in which Godhead is translated into humanity; and it is this translation that underpins all our subsequent translations of words about the Word from one language to another. In the Christmas sermon of 1611, the very year the KJV was first published, he says:

> The word that is Hebrew for flesh the same is also Hebrew for good tidings, as we call it the Gospel sure not without the holy ghost so dispensing it there could be no other meaning but that some incarnation, or making flesh, should be generally good news for the whole world. To let us know this good tidings is come to pass he tells us the word is now become flesh.[9]

This is a central passage for understanding of Andrewes's sense of the theological reach of translation. It is also worth noting the way in which this very passage contains a series of translations and retranslations, but this time not so much between languages as between the different registers of English itself. So we have a series of versions or variants on *evangelium*, or good news: first "good tidings," then the more formal or theological "the gospel," then the much more informal "generally good news," and then back to "good tidings" again, all in the space of a single sentence!

Some people are surprised to discover that the translators of the KJV did not consistently use their own translation in their own preaching but continued to avail themselves of the Geneva Bible and other sources, or, as in the case of Andrewes, to make fresh and varied translations in situ. This should not be surprising at all, for as these Pentecost sermons make clear, there can never, in Andrewes's view, be "tongues" or translations enough to be adequate to the richness and depth of the Word. It follows that while Andrewes might be glad that his own translation would be so celebrated and remembered after four hundred years, he would be horrified to find it set up

as a special, single, and only authoritative version, or used as a stick to beat other translations with. On the contrary, Andrewes the scholar would have welcomed the linguistic and archaeological discoveries that have assisted new translators, and Andrewes the linguist and master of prose style would have been delighted by the many efforts since his day to reflect the mystery of the gospel in the different idioms of English as a worldwide language.

Returning to the central insight here, that the Word made flesh is itself a kind of translation, a translation for which the particular meanings of individual words was already preparing us, it is not surprising that Andrewes also meditated on and marveled at the idea that the Word, this *Verbum,* should have become *infans,* that is, "without speech," and sees it as a paradox of the divine humility. Here is a famous passage reflecting on this point that was to have a profound influence on T. S. Eliot:

> Signs are taken for wonders. "Master, we would fain see a sign," that is a miracle. And in this sense it is a sign to wonder at. Indeed, every word here is a wonder. Τὸ βρέφος, an infant; *Verbum infans*, the Word without a word; the eternal Word not able to speak a word; 1. a wonder sure. 2. And the σπαργανισμὸς, swaddled; and that a wonder too. "He," that (as in the thirty-eighth of Job he saith) "taketh the vast body of the main sea, turns it to and fro, as a little child, and rolls it about with the swaddling bands of darkness;"—He to come thus into clouts, Himself![10]

Before turning to the particular paradox about Word and words that so struck Eliot, it is worth noting that this passage is another good example of the other sense in which Andrewes approves and deploys "many tongues" rather than a single tongue in his utterance of the gospel. Within the supposedly "single tongue" of the English language there are many layers of tone and register. There are words with a common denotation but subtly varied connotations, and by playing with the different registers it is possible to make, even in one sentence, what Andrewes called the "concert of many instruments" and so capture a meaning, or a flavor and shade of meaning, that would otherwise be lost. In this passage he moves deftly between the polysyllabic or Latinate with its connotations of majesty and grandeur on the one hand, and short staccato monosyllabic words of Saxon root with their suggestion of something primal and simple on the other. So we have a simple childlike phrase like "to and fro as a little child" juxtaposed with the more highly wrought poetic effects of "the swaddling bands of darkness," and then a return to the simple colloquial and alliterative Saxon pith of "come to clouts himself."

The Incarnation of the Word and the Translation of Human Lives

This freedom to play with the variety of registers and tones in such a bold and original way is one of the strengths of the KJV. It is just the technique that was being explored and deployed by Shakespeare, and at almost exactly the same time. Take, for example, the extraordinary moment in *Macbeth* (1605–1606) when Macbeth says:

> Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? No this my hand will rather
> The Multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the green one red.[11]

Here Shakespeare deploys the vast and echoing words "multitudinous" and "incarnadine," carrying as they do the connotations of the cosmic dimension of regicide, but they are followed swiftly by an internal "translation" into briefest, simplest monosyllables: "the green one red," which brings home the irreducible, particular, plain fact of the crime. Both Shakespeare and Andrewes are availing themselves of the range and diversity of language in a way that subsequent generations seem never to have equaled.

Returning to Andrewes's insistence on the paradox of Christ as the *Verbum infans,* the "Word without a word," he is saying here that although the Word is for a while silent, he nevertheless abides as the meaning, thereby underpinning the ultimate source of meaning in the world. And so it is therefore of meaning in every language, the word "within the world and for the world" as Eliot says in the crucial passage of *Ash Wednesday* in which he develops the very ideas he had learned from Andrewes that helped to make him a Christian:

> If the lost word is lost, if the spent word is spent
> If the unheard, unspoken
> Word is unspoken, unheard;
> Still is the unspoken word, the Word unheard,
> The Word without a word, the Word within
> The world and for the world;
> And the light shone in darkness and
> Against the Word the unstilled world still whirled
> About the centre of the silent Word.[12]

So for Andrewes the Word of God has already made the greatest translation of all. The eternal Word, whom we could never know or even apprehend, has translated himself into our flesh and blood, translated eternity into time, and translated love into action. For Christ's followers the sayings of Jesus, the stories of his life enshrined in Scripture, have their meaning only when they are translated into the realities of everyday life, into ordinary conversation and action.

But God's great self-translation in Christ's incarnation is itself the beginning of that great translation of all our lives, which he achieves for us in his death and resurrection. The very meaning of death itself must henceforth be translated in a new way.

These ideas were developed and brought to perfection by the first generation to dwell on and preach from the KJV, which included John Donne, who knew Andrewes and was influenced and helped by him in many ways. Donne went on to make translation itself a key theme and metaphor not only for incarnation but also for death and resurrection in this great passage from his meditations:

> All mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated; God employs several translators; some pieces are translated by age, some by sickness, some by war, some by justice; but God's hand is in every translation, and his hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again for that library where every book shall lie open to one another.[13]

That final image of all of us, full of truth and meaning, bound together in love but richly open to one another like open books, comes from an imagination immensely enriched by the extraordinary open book that is the King James Bible.

Pentecost tells the story of translation as a divine and instantaneous gift. Andrewes did not expect his own labors to be assisted by such direct divine intervention, though there were times, especially when he was making up for the slack and shoddy work of others and was groaning under the burden of what he called his "translation days," when he must have wished for such another miracle of Pentecost. The Pentecost story itself though, with its affirmation and blessing of many tongues, not one, continued to inspire an effort of translation in which he availed himself of all the hidden languages layered into English: short sharp Saxon words,

august Latin roots and terminations, mellifluous French borrowings—all welded into a single subtle, flexible instrument that he wielded with extraordinary skill and imagination. So it is no wonder that Buckeridge said of Andrewes that he knew and loved so many languages that "he could have served as interpreter general at the confusion of tongues," for between 1604 and 1611 that is exactly what he did!

Notes

1. John Buckeridge, *A Sermon Preached at the Funeral of the Right Honourable and Reverend Father in God Lancelot, Late Lord Bishop of Winchester…* (included in the 1629 edition of the *Sermons of L Andrewes*; [repr. in *Works of Lancelot Andrewes, Sometime Bishop of Winchester*; ed. J. P. Wilson and James Bliss; 11 vols.; Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology; Oxford: Parker, 1841–1854], 5:257–98).

2. Henry Isaacson, "An Exact Narration of the Life and Death of the Late Reverend and Learned Prelate, and Painful Divine, Lancelot Andrewes, Late Bishop of Winchester, Which may Serve as a Pattern of Piety and Charity to all Godly Disposed Christians" (1650, repr. in Wilson and Bliss, *Works,* 10:xxv–xxvi).

3. Marianne Dorman, ed., *The Liturgical Sermons of Lancelot Andrewes* (2 vols.; Durham: Pentland, 1992–1993), 2:209.

4. Ibid., 216.

5. Ibid., 215.

6. Ibid., 216.

7. Ibid., 221–22.

8. Ibid., 1:50–51.

9. Ibid., 32.

10. Wilson and Bliss, *Works,* 1:204.

11. *Macbeth* 2.2.59–62. See *The Tragedy of Macbeth* (ed. Nicholas Brooke; Oxford Shakespeare; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), notes on p. 129, for an interesting discussion of the language of this passage.

12. T. S. Eliot, "Ash Wednesday," section 5, lines 1-9, in *Collected Poems, 1909–1962* (1963; repr., London: Faber, 1974), 102.

13. John Donne, "Meditation XVII," in *Complete Poetry and Selected Prose* (ed. John Hayward; London: Nonesuch Press, 1972), 537–38.

The KJV and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric

Barbara K. Lewalski

Why was there such a flowering of religious lyric poetry in England in the seventeenth century, and did the publication of the King James (or Authorized) Version in 1611 have anything to do with it? I think it did, for reasons and in ways I want to explore here. Some aspects of the Reformation and its aftermath in England seem hardly conducive to the development of religious arts—insistence on the single, literal sense of Scripture, iconoclasm, suspicion in some quarters about church music, anxieties about adding to or ornamenting the Word of God in sermons or poems, and the removal of the rich panorama of Roman Catholic ceremonies, saints, and symbols that had often served as prompts to the literary imagination (as, for example, with Dante). But to focus on such negatives, as some have,[1] leaves us unable to account for some of the finest religious lyric in our language.

Poetry is a verbal medium, and lyric poetry normally involves a speaker's analysis and expression of emotions, sensations, and attitudes, personal or collective. Some years ago, in a book called *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-century Religious Lyric,*[2] I argued, and still believe, that two aspects of Reformation culture played a major role in fostering English religious lyric. One is the new attention to the reading and analysis of the text of Scripture as the sole pathway to salvation, even as the text of the Bible was becoming widely available in vernacular translations by Tyndale, Coverdale, the Bishops' Bible, the octavo Geneva Bible with its extensive Calvinist marginalia, and finally the KJV. Reformers such as Erasmus, Luther, and Calvin, and English authors of works on the arts of preaching such as Richard Bernard and William Perkins, urged careful philological attention to the genres of the biblical books and the

several kinds of figurative language found within them: similes, metaphors, hyperbole, apostrophe, epithet, metonymy, and more.[3] Perkins, for example, urged analysis of the Scripture text "using a grammaticall, rhetoricall, and logical analysis and the help of the rest of the arts."[4]

In the wake of such analysis it became a commonplace to refer to the "poetical" part of Scripture—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs—which Coverdale's Bible and the influential Protestant Latin Junius-Tremellius version set off as a separate section with that label.[5] Sir Phillip Sidney's *Defence of Poesy* (published 1595) points to the books and sections of the Bible so designated, underscoring their different biblical genres:

> The chiefe [poets] both in antiquitie and excellencie, were they that did imitate the unconceivable excellencies of God. Such were *David* in his Psalmes, *Salomon* in his song of songs, in his *Ecclesiastes* and *Proverbes. Moses* and *Debora,* in their Hymnes, and the wryter of *Jobe*. Which beside other, the learned *Emanuell Tremellius,* and *Franciscus Junius,* doo entitle the Poeticall part of the scripture.[6]

Moreover, these poetic parts of the Bible were often cited as affording Christian poets both warrant and artful poetic models as to both subject and form, notably by the French poet Guillaume de Saluste, Sieur Du Bartas in his influential dream-vision poem "Uranie" (1574), translated into English by none other than King James I and also Joshua Sylvester, which baptized that classical Muse of Astronomy as the Muse of Christian poetry.[7] This emphasis prompted an upsurge of new translations, paraphrases, and poetic versions of those biblical books and especially the Psalms (well over 300 metrical versions had been published by 1640). The theoretical statements prefacing such publications (by George Wither, Henry Ainsworth, Thomas Gataker, and others) identified within the Psalms various sorts of lyric poetry—not only the Pauline categories of hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs, but within those, meditations of several kinds, prayers, hymns of praise, lamentations, psalms of instruction, penitential psalms, thanksgivings, epithalamia, as well as both lyric and dramatic forms and the primary literary modes: pastoral, tragic, satiric, heroic.[8]

A second aspect of Reformation culture important for the flowering of religious lyric was its stimulus to self-analysis and reflection, to introspective intensity and keen psychological awareness. In treatise after treatise Christians were urged to find in themselves and their own experience (and sometimes to record in spiritual diaries and conversion narratives) the signs of election as they enact the Reformation paradigm

of salvation: calling, conversion, justification, regeneration, adoption, sanctification. The accompanying psychological and emotional states—anguished conviction of sin and guilt, sorrow and repentance, joy in the awareness of God's saving grace—were commonly attended, warn William Perkins, Richard Rogers, and many others, with much vacillation at every stage.[9] Christians were also urged to apply biblical texts and exemplars to themselves. "Application to the self" was a standard feature of much sermon construction, and much Protestant typological exegesis read Old Testament types as recapitulated and fulfilled not only in Christ or the church as antitypes, but also in the individual Christian. The range of psychological and emotional feeling so prompted was seen to have been modeled in the Psalms, which from patristic times had been termed an "anatomy of the soul." Luther declared that the Psalms contain "the feelings and experience of all the faithful, both under their sorrows and under their joys, both in their adversity and their prosperity,"[10] while many followed Calvin in applying that conclusion to each individual:

> Not without cause am I woont to terme this book the Anatomy of all the partes of the Soule, inasmuch as a man shal not find any affection in himselfe, wherof the Image appeereth not in this glasse. Yea rather, the holy Ghost hath heere lyvely set out before our eyes, all the greefes, sorowes, feares, doutes, hopes, cares, anguishes, and finally all the trubblesome motions wherewith mennes mindes are woont to be turmoyed.[11]

Yet with the large exception of many of Donne's religious poems we find nothing much in the way of original personal religious lyric in English until after publication of the KJV. I suggest that this translation played some role in prompting the biblical poetics theory of Donne (spelled out in 1619 and after), and the religious lyric of Herbert, Vaughan, and others for two reasons. First, that translation, more than any other in English, embodied in its eloquent language and stylistic choices the idea that much of the Bible is poetic, and could therefore be a model and poetic resource for religious lyric poets. Though some members of the committee that created the KJV knew Hebrew, they did not understand or seek to imitate Hebrew versification, but they did understand how to create poetic effects in English with parallelism, apostrophes, dramatic opening lines, strong and direct verbs—and they did so. They especially knew how to attend to rhythm. A few examples comparing passages in the popular Geneva Bible with their counterparts in the KJV—very close in diction—will illustrate this attention to parallelism, active verbs, and rhythm:

Psalm 23:5
Geneva: Thou doest prepare a table before me in the sight of mine adversaries; thou doest annoint my head with oyle and my cup runneth over.
KJV: Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou annointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Psalm 24:1
Geneva: The earth is the Lords, and all that is in the worlde and they that dwel therein.
KJV: The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell within.

Psalm 85:10–11
Geneva: Mercie and trueth shal mete: righteousness and peace shall kisse one another. / Truth shal bud out of the earth, and righteousnes shall loke downe from heaven
KJV: Mercy and Truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other; Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

A second reason may be that the KJV offered the biblical text without the elaborate commentary of the Geneva, which presented that text as a matter for theological interpretation and directed that interpretation insistently. By contrast, the reader of the KJV could experience the text affectively, and a poet could feel freer to use it as he or she might need or want to.

John Donne's Holy Sonnets and several of his other religious poems predate the publication of the AV, so do not show its direct influence; they circulated widely in manuscripts but were not published until after his death in 1631. But most of these and the few written later reflect the Reformation and biblical poetics concerns I have discussed: an intense focus upon his vacillating emotions and states of soul, and also an application to himself, often dramatically, of various biblical situations and scenes: "Spit in my face, yee Jewes, and pierce my side"; "What if this present were the worlds last night?"; "In what torne ship soever I embarke, / That ship shall be my embleme of thy Arke"; "Looke, Lord, and finde both *Adams* met in me. / As the first *Adams* sweat surrounds my face, / May the last *Adams* blood my soul embrace."[12] In a poem entitled "The Litanie" (ca. 1609–1610) Donne also voices the widespread contemporary anxiety about how far human art, ornament, and figurative language may be used in sermons or biblically based poetry. In this poem Donne rewrites and applies to

himself several petitions of the (Anglican) Litany of the Saints, addressing the biblical prophet-poets in these terms:

> Those Heavenly Poets which did see
> Thy will, and it expresse
> In rhythmique feet, in common pray for mee,
> That I by them excuse not my excesse
> In seeking secrets, or Poetiquenesse. (68–72)

He here acknowledges his disposition to revel in witty and sometimes outrageous paradox—as when, in Holy Sonnet 14, "Batter my heart, three person'd God," he transforms the figure of Christ the Bridegroom of the Soul (a usual allegorical reading of Canticles) into Christ the rapist—proclaiming himself "Nor ever chast, except you ravish mee" (14).

After his ordination in 1615, Donne's treatment of biblical texts was partially shaped by the KJV. He preached eloquent, poetic sermons at Whitehall, at Paul's Cross, at the Inns of Court, and elsewhere, in which he often explicated Scripture texts by referring to an original word or phrase in the Hebrew Bible or its Latin equivalent in the Vulgate or Junius-Tremellius Bibles, as well as to the English translation in Geneva or the KJV. His free poetic translation of the book of Lamentations is subtitled "*for the most part according to* Tremellius," though some phraseology echoes Geneva and the KJV. Yet as he preached on psalm texts (34 of his 160 extant sermons are based on psalms), he always quoted from the KJV, developing and voicing as he did so a view of the Bible, and especially of the Psalms, as a poetic text and as a model for himself.

He often began sermons on the Psalms by commenting on their meaning for him. In a sermon at St. Paul's, January 29, 1726, he elaborated the commonplace about the emotional range and applicability of the Psalms to all occasions and persons, and specifically to himself:

> The PSALMES are the Manna of the church. As Manna tasted to every man like that that he liked Best, so doe the Psalmes minister Instruction, and satisfaction, to every man in every emergency and occasion. *David* was not onely a cleare Prophet of Christ himselfe, but a prophet of every particular Christian; He foretels what I, what any shall doe, and suffer, and say.[13]

And in an undated sermon (spring or summer, 1618) preached at Lincoln's Inn, he acknowledged a quite personal attraction to and sense of relation to the Psalms as poems:

> I acknowledge, that my spirituall appetite carries me still, upon the *Psalms of David,* for a first course … and upon the *Epistles of Saint Paul,* for a second course … and my meditations even for these *publike exercises* to Gods church, returne oftnest to these two. … because they are Scriptures, written in such forms, as I have been most accustomed to; Saint *Pauls* being letters, and *Davids* being Poems.[14]

Preaching on the Psalms and other texts quoted from the KJV may have helped Donne resolve the anxieties he had voiced in "The Litanie," and to find an answer to the many reformers who insisted that a plain style avoiding human additions is required in sermons (and poems) dealing with Scripture. Into a prose work composed in 1623 when he thought himself at death's door, he inserted a far-reaching biblical poetics argument justifying his own kind of artful, highly figurative, and witty religious poetry and prose as modeled on the biblical example. That meditative work, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions,* traces the stages of the illness in twenty-three sections, with each section in three parts. The first part, titled "Meditation," focuses on the symptoms, effects, and treatment of the illness at the given stage, emphasizing unpredictable vacillations. The second, "Expostulation," reads those physical conditions as analogues and signs of a sickness of soul and its cure, quoting relevant Scripture texts. The third part, "Prayer," asks that those spiritual cures be granted and sustained. In "Expostulation 19" Donne launches into his remarkable biblical poetics argument about the nature of the Scripture text and its proper use as a model for later writers, including himself:

> My *God*, my *God*, Thou art a *direct God*, may I not say a *literall God*, a God that wouldest be understood *literally,* and according to the *plaine sense* of all that thou saiest? But thou art also (*Lord*, I intend it to thy *glory*, and let no *prophane misinterpreter* abuse it to thy *diminution*) thou art a *figurative,* a *metaphoricall God* too: A *God* in whose words there is such a height of *figures,* such *voyages*, such *peregrinations* to fetch remote and precious *metaphors*, such *extentions*, such *spreadings*, such *Curtaines* of *Allegories*, such *third Heavens* of *Hyperboles,* so *harmonious eloqutions*, so *retired* and so *reserved* expressions, so *commanding perswasions*, so *perswading commandements*, such *sinewes* even in thy *milke*, and such *things* in thy *words*, as all *prophane Authors,* seeme of the seed of the *Serpent,* that *creepes*, thou art the *dove* that *flies.* … Neither art thou thus a *figurative*, a *Metaphoricall God* in thy word only, but in thy workes too. The stile of thy *works,* the phrase of thine *Actions,* is *Metaphoricall.* The i*nstitution* of thy whole *worship* in the *old Law* was a continuall *Allegory*;

> *types* & *figures* overspread all, and *figures* flowed into *figures*, and powred themselves out into farther *figures*; *Circumcision* carried a figure of *Baptisme*, & *Baptisme c*arries a *figure* of that purity which we shall have in *perfection* in the *new Jerusalem*. Neither didst thou speake and work in this *language,* onely in the time of thy *Prophets*; but since thou spokest in thy *Son* it is so too. How often, how much more often doth thy *Sonne* call himself a *way*, and a *light*, and a *gate*, and a *Vine*, and *bread*, than the *Sonne of God*, or of *Man*? How much oftener doth he exhibit a *Metaphoricall Christ*, than a *reall,* a *literall*? This hath occasioned thine ancient *servants,* whose delight it was to write after thy *Copie*, to proceede in the same way in their *expositions* of the *Scriptures*, and in their composing of *publike liturgies,* and of *private prayers* to thee, to make their accesses to thee in such a kind of *language,* as thou wast pleased to speake to them, in a *figurative*, in a *Metaphoricall language,* in which manner I am bold to call … now.[15]

Donne's younger friend, the poet and clergyman George Herbert, looked directly to the KJV as a poetic model and resource and used biblical texts in original and imaginative ways; he may owe something to Donne's example and concept of biblical poetics, but he is very different kind of religious poet. He destroyed all his secular poems (save for a few in Latin) and was said to have preached eloquent sermons that "ravished like poems" in his little parish church at Bemerton, near Salisbury, but none of them survive.[16] He did, however, prepare an extensive collection of religious poetry, mostly written before his ordination in 1630, reportedly describing it to his friend Isaak Walton as at once intensely personal—"A picture of the many spiritual Conflicts that have passed between God and my Soul, before I could submit mine to the will of Jesus my master"[17]—and at the same time (like the Psalms) as a representation of common religious experience. His good friend Nicholas Ferrar of Little Gidding followed his deathbed instructions in 1633 to publish it if he thought it would "turn to the advantage of any dejected poor Soul," and otherwise to burn it.[18]

That volume, *The Temple*, has a liturgical and architectural dimension, with poems titled "The Church-Porch," "The Altar," "The Church-Floore," "The Windows," "Church-Monuments," and so on, but it reconceives such elements to pertain primarily to the temple in the heart as the New Testament antitype of the Hebrew temple. This central metaphor governing the volume has its source in 1 Cor 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." Also, though some poems take off from other biblical books—"The Church-

Porch" from Proverbs, "The Sacrifice" from Lamentations—the large group of lyrics that make up "The Church," the central section of that three-part volume, is conceived as a book of Psalms for the temple in the heart by a New Testament psalmist. Herbert often voices anxiety about the kind of poetic language appropriate to such a role, but finds direction in echoing, engaging with, responding to, or rewriting Scripture texts. And he commonly depends on readers to recognize, complete, and properly interpret such allusions.

The opening poem titled "The Altar" and shaped like an altar of sacrifice sets out these terms:

A broken ALTAR, Lord, thy servant reares,
Made of a heart, and cemented with teares:
Whose parts are as thy hand did frame;
No workmans tool hath touch'd the same.
A H E A R T alone
Is such a stone,
As n o t h i n g but
Thy pow'r doth cut.
Wherefore each part
Of my hard heart
Meets in this frame,
To praise thy name.
That if I chance to hold my peace,
These stones to praise thee may not cease.
O let thy blessed S A C R I F I C E be mine,
And sanctifie this A L T A R to be thine.[19]

This poem also identifies the poet-psalmist in the three roles he takes on throughout the volume: Christian everyman, priest serving at the altar, and new Davidic poet with responsibility to produce fit praises for God. The first words indicate that the poem is a response to Ps 51:l7, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise"—identifying the heart of every penitent as the New Testament altar. Several other Scripture texts present the heart as the antitype of the Hebrew altar of unhewn stones divinely prescribed in Exod 20:25: "thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it"—indicating that God's hand alone must build the altar in the heart. It also evokes a medley of biblical texts promising that God will exchange a stony heart for a heart of flesh (Ezek 11:19), and

describing a new dwelling place for God not in the heavens and earth but with the man "that is poor and of a contrite spirit" (Isa 66:1–2). Throughout Herbert's volume the titles and opening lines of many poems register (as the Psalms were said to do) a full range of spiritual emotions experienced by the Christian everyman: five poems titled "Affliction," three named "Love," others called "Sighs and Grones," "Miserie," "Dulnesse." Likewise for first lines: "Why do I languish thus, drooping and dull" ("Dulnesse"); "Joy, I did lock thee up: but some bad man / Hath let thee out again" ("The bunch of grapes"); "With Sick and famisht eyes" ("Longing"); "How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clean / Are thy returns" ("The Flower"); "It cannot be. Where is that mightie joy / That just now took up all my heart" ("The Temper").

Several poems also explore the emotions attending the speaker's role as priest—often resolved by recollection of a Scripture text or story that is thereby imported into the poem. The most familiar such poem is "The Collar," whose title points to the clerical collar now experienced as a slave's collar, an emblem of bondage. Herbert's speaker complains that the eucharistic elements afford him no sense of joy and fruition: "Sure there was wine / Before my sighs did drie it: there was corn / Before my tears did drown it" (10–12). He has come to experience the priestly life solely in terms of duties, obligations, laws, and resolves on rebellion: "I Struck the board, and cry'd, No more / I will abroad" (1–2). His "fierce and wild" rebellion mounts through the poem until it is quelled by a single word from an imagined caller (another play on the title): "Me thoughts I heard one calling '*Childe*' / And I reply'd, My Lord." That single word recalls and so imports into the poem the biblical verses from Gal 4:1–7, reminding the speaker that he is no longer a ward or servant in bondage under the law, but a son, "and if a son, then an heir" to the promises and the kingdom.

Several poems explore the speaker's anxieties and difficulties in the third role identified in "The Altar"—that of Christian poet whose duty it is to find fit ways to praise God. Two poems titled "Jordan" signify by that title the speaker's ongoing efforts to "baptize" his verse to God's service, and to find for this special subject a language distinct from the allegorical modes, pastoral figures, and Petrarchan diction of contemporary secular poetry. "Jordan [I]" begins by asking, "Who sayes that fictions onely and false hair / Become a verse? Is there in truth no beautie?" The final lines (echoing Ps 145:1) point to the Bible as repository of truth as well as a model for plain yet artful language: "I envie no mans nightingale or spring; / Nor let them punish me with losse of ryme / Who plainly say, My God,

My King." In "Jordan [II]" the speaker reports that he began by adhering to a law of works in poetry, seeking out "quaint words, and trim invention; / Curling with metaphors a plain intention" (3–4). At length he was recalled from this "wide … pretence" by the voice of a friend (a divine or inner voice) pointing him to the already written (biblical) model which holds its own poetic beauty: "*There is in love a sweetnesse ready penn'd: / Copie out onely that, and save expense*" (16–18).

Many poems report the dependence of this poet's praises on his emotional state, his awareness, or lack of awareness, of God's care and love of him, of God's action in and on his heart. In "The Temper [I]" he comments that his rhymes would "Gladly engrave thy love in steel, / If what my soul doth feel sometimes, / My soul might ever feel" (2–4). In "Praise [I]" he begins, "To write a verse or two, is all the praise, / That I can raise: / Mend my estate in any wayes, / Thou shalt have more" (1–4). In "Deniall" the first stanza dramatizes how his verse responds to his varying sense of God's responses to him. "When my devotions could not pierce / Thy silent eares; / Then was my heart broken, as was my verse: / My breast was full of fears / And disorder" (1–5). The final stanza indicates the return of God's favors in the return of rhyme and order to the poem: "That so thy favours granting my request, / They and my minde may chime, / And mend my ryme" (28–30). In "A true Hymne" he concludes that if "the verse be somewhat scant, / God doth supplie the want" (17–18). In the elegant poem "The Flower" he rejoices that after a sterile period caused by a sense of God's absence or anger he feels God's favor again, "How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clean / Are thy returns! … And now in age I bud again, / After so many deaths I live and write; / I once more smell the dew and rain, / And relish versing" (1–2, 136–139). And in that condition he can promise, in "Praise [II]," "Wherefore with my utmost art / I will sing thee" (9–10).

Part I of the poem "Easter" offers probably the most complete statement of Herbert's poetics, developed as a reworking of Ps 57:7–9: "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing, and give praise. / Awake up, my glory, awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. / I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people."

Herbert writes:

> Rise heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise
> Without delayes,
> Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
> With him mayst rise:

That, as his death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part
With all thy art.
The crosse taught all wood to resound his name,
Who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song
Pleasant and long:
Or since all musick is but three parts vied
And multiplied;
O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,
And make up our defects with his sweet art. (1–18)

These verses present as interlocking elements in the creation of religious poetry the risen heart, which depends on Christ's previous rising (not the poet's will, as in David's case); his poetic lute (his own poetic resources), which must struggle "with all thy art" (much more than did David's psaltery and harp) in order to harmonize with Christ's stretched sinews on the cross; and God's Holy Spirit (which inspired the poetry of the Bible), whose "sweet art" will make up the human poet's defects. This poetics produces, in part 2 of the poem, a simple but exquisite psalm of praise beginning, "I got me flowers to straw thy way; / I got me boughs off many a tree: / But thou wast up by break of day, / And brought'st thy sweets along with thee" (19–22). Throughout the volume Herbert enacts this poetics, as we have seen, by occasionally assimilating the biblical or psalmic quotations into his poems, but most often, as here, by transposing biblical language, imagery, and forms upon a Christian lute, as befits a New Testament psalmist.

The final poem of the lyric collection, "Love [III]," takes off from and reimagines Ps 23:5, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over," as well as Luke 12:37, "Blessed are those sevants, whom the lord when he cometh … shall gird himself, and make them to sit downe to meat, and will come forth and serve them." Herbert's poem presents divine love and care in terms of a courteous dialogue between host and guest:

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,

Guiltie of dust and sinne.
But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
If I lacked any thing.

A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here:
Love said, you shall be he.
I the unkinde, ungratefull? Ah, my deare,
I cannot look on thee.
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
Who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marr'd them: let my shame
Go where it doth deserve.
And know you not, sayes Love, who bore the blame?
My deare, then I will serve.
You must sit down, sayes Love, and taste my meat:
So I did sit and eat.

This poem brings the speaker's three roles to fulfillment: as Christian everyman he experiences the complete transformation of his stony heart to a heart of flesh, as priest he does not now serve at a stony altar but sits as guest at a banquet table of intimate communion, and as poet he has created an exquisite psalm of new covenant praise, based not on groans (as in the poem "Sion") but on perfected joys. Prompted by the poetry of the Bible, and especially the Psalms, Herbert has created original religious lyrics that are simple yet of great variety and complexity, "plain" yet exhibiting "utmost art."

I cannot discuss here the several other seventeenth-century lyric poets, major and minor, who in their various ways followed Herbert's example in taking the Bible as poetic model and resource—Robert Herrick, Christopher Harvey, the American Edward Taylor, and others—but I will comment briefly on the finest of them, Henry Vaughan. He published two early volumes of secular poems in the Cavalier mode, and later a book of meditations, *The Mount of Olives*, and a few treatises on a range of topics.[20] While he waited out the Civil War in his native Wales, he underwent a conversion experience that led him to publish a volume of religious lyrics, *Silex Scintillans* (the flashing flint), in 1650, adding a second part to it in 1655.[21] He claims in the preface and manifests throughout the volume a

major debt to Herbert. Some twenty-six poems have titles appropriated from *The Temple*: many begin with an exact or nearly exact quotation of a line from Herbert; the frontispiece emblem, illustrating the volume's title, is of a rocky heart struck by a God's lightning bolt. Yet Vaughan's poems are brilliantly original: despite the emblem, Vaughan's governing metaphor is not the heart but his own (and others') Christian pilgrimage. In poem after poem Vaughan's speaker as pilgrim travels through a landscape fusing Welsh scenes and biblical places: he walks in the Old Testament groves where prophets talked with God ("Religion," "The Pilgrimage"); he searches for his Savior in New Testament places (Bethlehem in "The Shepherds"), Jerusalem, with the ass that carried Jesus ("The Ass"). He sees the strife-torn British church as the bride of Canticles now dwelling in the wilderness ("The Brittish Church"); he takes the Mount of Olives as his poet's mount in place of Parnassus ("Mount of Olives"); he seeks to travel back to his innocent infancy with its remembered visions of heaven ("The Retreate"); he is suddenly surprised to hear an angel cry (quoting Rev 14:18), "Arise, thrust in thy sickle" ("Corruption"). His pilgrimage chiefly takes place in a land of veils, clouds, mists, and darkness, but it is directed toward a place of clear vision, light, and glory. His biblical resources are most often drawn from Canticles or the book of Revelation, and rather than expecting the reader to recognize such allusions as Herbert does, he usually quotes them as epigraphs before or after the poem—often from the KJV but sometimes from Geneva, and occasionally from the Junius-Tremellius Latin text. In "The Search," to take one example, he hears a voice directing him to take his imagined journey beyond the biblical sites, to search for God within: "Me thought I heard one singing thus,"

1.
Leave, leave, thy gadding thoughts
Who Pores
And spies
Still out of Doores
descries
Within them nought.

2.
The skinne, and shell of things
Though faire,
are not
Thy wish, nor pray'r

but got
By meer Despair
of wings.

3.
To rack old Elements,
or Dust
and say
Sure here he must
needs stay
Is not the way,
nor just.
Search well another world: who studies this,
Travels in Clouds, seeks *Manna*, where none is.

Acts, Cap. 17. ver. 27, 28.
That they should seeke the Lord, if haply they might feele after him, and finde him, though he be not farre from euery one of vs. For in him we liue, and moue, and haue our being.

The poem concludes with a scriptural epigraph quoted from the KJV. And, as often with Vaughan, the epigraph serves as dialogic commentary on the experience the poem records.

These examples will, I trust, indicate that the KJV became a significant factor in the flowering of English religious lyric poetry in the seventeenth century.

Notes

1. For this position see Malcolm M. Ross, *Poetry and Dogma: The Transfiguration of Eucharistic Symbols in Seventeenth-Century English Poetry* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1954). Others, like Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation: A Study in English Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), attribute the special qualities of this poetry to what it retains of medieval and Tridentine Catholic practices.

2. Barbara K. Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

3. Erasmus, *Ecclesiastae, Sive de Ratione Concionandi* (Basel: Froben, 1535), book 3; Martin Luther, *An Exposition of Salomons Booke, Called Ecclesiastes or the Preacher* (London: Daye, 1573), 8; John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion,* 4.17.20–21 (trans. Ford Lewis Battles; ed. John T. McNeill; 2 vols.; Library of Christian Classics 20–21; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 2:1383–86; Richard Bernard, *The Faithfull*

Shepherd (2nd ed.; London: Pavier, 1621), 41, 47–48; William Perkins, *The Arte of Prophecying, Or, A Treeatise Concerning the Sacred and Onely True Manner and Methode of Preaching,* in *The Workes of That Favoured and Worthy Minister of Christ in the University of Cambridge, William Perkins* (trans. Thomas Tuke; 2 vols.; London: Legatt, 1612–1613), 2:654–56.

4. Perkins, *Arte of Prophecying,* in *Workes,* 2:650.

5. Miles Coverdale, *Biblia: The Byble That Is the Holy Scrypture of the Olde and New Testament* (London: Nicholson, 1535); Immanuel Tremellius and Franciscus Junius, *Biblia Sacra* (London: Bishop, 1593), sig. [A aa].

6. Sir Phillip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesie* (London: Olney, 1595), sigs. C 1v–C 2.

7. Du Bartas, "L'Uranie," *La muse chrétienne* (Bordeaux, 1574); rev. in *Les Oeuvres* (Paris: Bordeaux, 1579); King James I, "The Uranie, or Heavenly Muse," *The Essayes of a Prentise, in the Divine Art of Poesie* (Edinburgh: Vautroullier, 1584); Josuah Sylvester, trans., "Urania," in "Fragments and Other Small Workes of Bartas," *Devine Weekes and Workes* (2 vols.; London: Lownes, 1605), 2:528–42.

8. George Wither, *A Preparation to the Psalter* (London: Oakes, 1619), 54; Henry Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the Five Bookes of Moses, the Booke of the Psalmes, and the Song of Songs* (London: Bellamie, 1627), *Psalmes,* 5; Thomas Gataker, "Davids Instructor," *Certain Sermons, First Preached, and after Published at Several Times* (London: Haviland, 1637).

9. William Perkins, *A Treatise Tending unto a Declaration, Whether a Man Be in the Estate of Damnation, or in the Estate of Grace,* in *Workes,* 1:364–77; Richard Rogers, *Seven Treatises: Containing Such Direction as Is Gathered out of the Holie Scriptures … Called the Practise of Christianitie* (London: Kingston, 1603), 68–211, esp. 44.

10. Martin Luther, *A Manual of the Book of Psalms* (trans. Henry Cole; London: Seeley and Burnside, 1837), 5.

11. John Calvin, *The Psalmes of David and Others* (trans. Arthur Golding; London, 1625), sig. A 4.

12. Sonnet 11, line 1; Sonnet 13, line 1; "A Hymne to Christ, at the Authors last going into Germany (1619), lines 1–2; "Hymne to God my God, in my sicknesse (1623), lines 23–24). See also "Goodfriday, 1613. Riding Westward." Donne's divine poems are quoted from *John Donne: The Complete English Poems* (ed. C. A. Patrides and Robin Hamilton; London: Dent, 1994).

13. *The Sermons of John Donne* (ed. George R. Potter and Evelyn M. Simpson; 10 vols.; 1953–1962; repr., Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 7:51.

14. Ibid., 2:49.

15. John Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions and Severall Steps in My Sicknes* (London: Jones, 1624), 479–87.

16. Some sense of Herbert's preparation for sermons is afforded by the posthumous publication of his *Priest to the Temple, or, The Country Parson: His Character, and Rule of Holy Life* (London: Maxey, 1652).

17. Izaak Walton, *The Life of Mr. George Herbert* (London: Newcomb, 1670), 70.

18. Ibid.

19. George Herbert, *The Temple: Sacred Poems and Pious Ejaculations* (Cambridge: Buck, 1633), 18. All of Herbert's poems are quoted from this first edition.

20. Henry Vaughan, *Poems, with the Tenth Satyre of Juvenal Englished* (London: Badger, 1646); idem, *Olor Iscanus: A Collection of Some Select Poems, and Translations* (London: T.W., 1651); idem, *The Mount of Olives: Or, Solitary Devotions* (London: Leake, 1652).

21. *Silex Scintillans: or Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations* (London: Blackie, 1650); *Silex Scintillans: Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations* (2nd ed.; London: Blackie, 1655). Vaughan's poems are quoted from the 1655 edition.

The King James Bible: Messianic Meditations

Deborah W. Rooke

> Gops[all]. Jul. 10. 1741
> Handel says he will do nothing next Winter, but I hope I shall perswade him to set another Scripture Collection I have made for him, & perform it for his own Benefit in Passion Week. I hope he will lay out his whole Genius & Skill upon it, that the Composition may excell all his former Compositions, as the Subject excells every other Subject. The Subject is Messiah.[1]

This letter from the landed Leicestershire gentleman Charles Jennens to his friend Edward Holdsworth is the earliest information we have about the genesis of George Frideric Handel's masterpiece *Messiah*. There can be no doubt that *Messiah* is responsible for much popular knowledge of the KJV, and also that it has to a significant extent established the commonly accepted messianic interpretation of the texts that it uses. But *Messiah*'s appropriation of the KJV is far from the straightforward presentation of self-evident truth that it might appear to be, partly because the KJV's presentation of that truth is itself questionable and partly because in assembling the Scripture collection that became the basis of *Messiah* Jennens did not always use the KJV. It is this complicated relationship between Scripture in general, the KJV in particular, and the libretto of *Messiah* that will be the subject of this paper.

As indicated in Jennens's letter, *Messiah* is a Scripture collection, that is, a setting of verses taken directly from the Bible, rather than a dramatization of a biblical narrative like most of Handel's other oratorios.[2] Its scheme is the foretelling of the Messiah, the birth, life, atoning death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, and then the general resurrection and last judgment; but rather than speaking directly about its topic, it hints at it, often using Old Testament verses that are taken to refer to the Messiah whether or not they

mention such a figure explicitly. To that extent it speaks to those "in the know," as it were; those who understand what is being said are those who are familiar with what the chosen verses are supposed to refer to in the context of orthodox Christian belief. Musicologists debate the reason for this allusive quality; one suggestion is that Jennens wrote in this way in order to demonstrate the validity of Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah, and thereby to counter the skeptical views of eighteenth-century rationalist groups such as Deists who denied the existence of an interventionist God and anything miraculous, mysterious, or revelatory in religion.[3] Another suggestion is that eighteenth-century taste and blasphemy laws would have responded negatively to any direct portrayal of Christ on the stage, and so Jennens's allusive portrayal of his subject was the only kind of portrayal that was open to him.[4] Certainly *Messiah*'s London premiere in 1743 generated considerable disquiet among ecclesiastical authorities and the general public alike, arising at least partly from objections to such sacred subject matter being performed in the profane playhouse.[5] This would seem to lend credence to the arguments from propriety as a way of accounting for *Messiah*'s allusive qualities; but it need not exclude a more polemical motivation on Jennens's part.

In making his selection of verses for *Messiah*, Jennens used more material from the Old Testament than from the New Testament. The Old Testament material is concentrated in parts 1 and 2, while part 3 (the final part, referring to the general resurrection and last judgment) consists almost entirely of New Testament material. It is the Old Testament material that will be the focus of this paper, partly because as an Old Testament scholar I have a vested interest in it, but partly also because it is in relation to the Old Testament material that the most interesting issues arise relating to the translation, interpretation, and usage of the texts.

In choosing his texts, Jennens seems to have drawn on three main sources of inspiration. The first and most obvious source is that of the Bible itself. As is well known, the New Testament writers cite and allude to a wide range of Old Testament material in their presentation of the life, works, and significance of Jesus of Nazareth, demonstrating thereby that he is the fulfillment of prophecy and the anointed Son of God; and significant numbers of the Old Testament texts that appear in *Messiah* are used of Jesus by the New Testament writers.[6] A second important source of inspiration for Jennens would have been the lectionary readings set in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer (Prayer Book). As shown by Geoffrey Cuming,[7] many of the texts used in *Messiah* are taken from readings that

are set for major Christian festivals in the Prayer Book. Indeed, the liturgical usage of many Old Testament texts is rooted in their New Testament usage, so it is on occasion hard to tell whether Jennens's immediate inspiration for including particular texts was their use in the New Testament or in the Prayer Book, since they appear in both. Third, there is a handful of Old Testament texts in the oratorio that appear to have neither direct biblical nor liturgical warrant for their association with the figure of the Messiah. But it takes little more than an examination of summary chapter headings and marginalia for these texts in the KJV and in the sixteenth-century English Bible translations prior to the KJV to see that, in using this material, Jennens is drawing on a well-established tradition of messianic or christological interpretation of it.[8]

Against this background, then, we shall consider a number of Old Testament texts that are used in *Messiah*, looking particularly at how the versions of these texts in *Messiah* relate to the KJV, and what kind of messianic interpretation they are subject to. As I hope is clear from what has already been said, the Old Testament material used by Jennens for *Messiah* had a long-established history of christological interpretation; but that interpretation is often based on manipulation of the text by Christian interpreters in order to bring out what they saw as the text's christological implications; and indeed, the translations adopted by the KJV translators reflect this same interpretive manipulation. Nor was Jennens himself above adapting the material he used in order to make the messianic point come across as clearly as possible. The basic biblical version that he used for *Messiah* was the King James Version, but he deviated from it quite regularly, in particular, by using the Coverdale translation of the Psalms that was in the Prayer Book rather than the KJV Psalms. In places, too, he used the KJV marginal readings[9] rather than the main text in order to get his point across.

Let us begin, then, by looking at two of the best-known messianic texts that appear in *Messiah*, both of which have been subject to long-standing Christian interpretive manipulation. The first is Isa 40:3, which appears very near the beginning of *Messiah*. Its wording in the libretto and in the KJV is identical: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." This particular wording is a translation, or rather, an interpretation, of the verse that is adopted by the Gospel writers as they quote the text and apply it to John the Baptist, who preached in the wilderness of Judea;[10] and it is the wording that appears in the KJV translation not only of the Gospel passages that quote Isa 40:3, but of Isa 40:3 itself. However, as modern Old

Testament scholars well know, this is arguably a fudge; the most natural way of reading the Hebrew text is to take it as two parallel complementary clauses introduced by the observation that a voice is calling:

> A voice calls:
> In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
> Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Interestingly, the 1560 Geneva Bible and the Bishops' Bible, like the KJV, translate Isa 40:3: "A voice crieth in the wilderness: prepare ye the way of the Lord"; but the earlier translation produced by Miles Coverdale (1535) is truer to the Hebrew as it renders the verse: "A voice crieth: prepare ye way for the Lord in ye wilderness." But for the KJV and for Jennens, the "messianic" interpretation is the correct one, supported as it is by centuries of Christian tradition and the authority of the New Testament.

Another such fudge that finds its way into the KJV and thence into the libretto of *Messiah* is in the "Immanuel" prophecy from Isa 7:14. Alluding to the birth of Jesus, the libretto says, "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel, God with us." Much of this wording is taken from Isa 7:14, but the translation of the name Emmanuel is from Matt 1:23, where the prophecy is quoted as being fulfilled in the birth of a son to Joseph ben David's virgin fiancée. The significant aspect here is of course the use of the term "virgin." Again, as is well known to Old Testament scholars, the Hebrew term used of the mother-to-be in Isa 7:14 is *ʿalmâ*, or young woman, which does not have the virginal connotations of the Greek word *parthenos* used by Matthew in his quotation of the prophecy. Indeed, such connotations were quite unnecessary for Isaiah, since the point of his prophecy—when taken in its entirety—was to say that if King Ahaz would but trust, God would deliver Judah from the enemies that threatened it within the time it took for a currently pregnant woman to give birth and wean her child.[11] The transformation from immediate reassurance to long-term eschatological miracle was brought about by the Septuagint (LXX), which for some reason used the term *parthenos* to render *ʿalmâ* in Isa 7:14, and which was the source of the quotation in Matt 1:23. The KJV, despite using the Hebrew text to produce its version of the Old Testament, retains the LXX use of the term "virgin" in Isa 7:14, doubtless because under the influence of Matt 1:23 the translators saw Isa 7 as a prophecy of Christ, and the page and chapter headings of the KJV for Isa 7 testify to their conviction: the chapter heading reads, "10 Ahaz

… hath for a signe, Christ promised," and the page heading proclaims, "Christ promised, and called Immanuel." Not that the KJV is unique in this treatment of Isa 7; Coverdale, the Geneva Bible, and the Bishops' Bible all do the same. The KJV thus continues the established traditional christological interpretation of Isa 7:14 despite the evidence of the Hebrew and regardless of the prophecy's original context; and this is the tradition that is taken up and perpetuated via the libretto of *Messiah*.

Page and chapter headings in the KJV not only affirm explicitly messianically oriented translations of texts such as Isa 7 and Isa 40, but offer messianic interpretations of texts that have no explicit reference to the Messiah, thereby evidencing a tradition of interpretation on which Jennens drew when making his selection of texts. Here it is not a question of making the translation reflect the christological convictions of the interpreters, as in the previous examples, but of assigning messianic significance to texts as they stand. Isaiah 35:5–6 is one such text, which appears in the libretto as: "Then shall the eyes of the blind be open'd, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing." Clearly, in Jennens's schema, talking about the blind seeing and deaf hearing and lame leaping is meant in some way to represent the ministry of Jesus, but there is no significant liturgical occasion on which Isa 35 is used, nor are these verses quoted directly in the New Testament. However, in the 1611 KJV, Isa 35 has the chapter summary heading, "1 The joyfull flourishing of Christes Kingdome. 3 The weake are incouraged by the vertues and priviledges of the Gospel." Further, in the margin by verses 5 and 6 are eleven cross-references to material in the Gospels and Acts (Matt 9:32; 11:5; 12:22; 15:30; 21:14; Mark 7:32; John 5:8, 9; Acts 3:2; 8:7; 14:8), all of which are stories of miracles of healing carried out by either Jesus or the apostles.[12] Nor is the KJV the only version to contain such interpretive hints. The Bishops' Bible, the version in most churches prior to the KJV, heads Isa 35, "Of the time and kingdome of Christ"; and the Geneva Bible similarly heads the chapter, "1 The great ioye of them that beleeve in Christ. 3 Their office which preach the Gospel. 8 The fruites that followe thereof." So there is clearly a well-established tradition of interpretation relating to Isa 35 that associated it with Jesus' ministry and therefore saw in it a prophecy of that ministry; the KJV has perpetuated that tradition in its metatext, and Jennens has followed suit by quoting from Isa 35 (KJV) in *Messiah*.

Another type of KJV metatext that was important for Jennens's compilation of the *Messiah* libretto, and that epitomizes the complex relationship

between the KJV and the libretto, was the marginal readings. This appears particularly in the use of Isa 40:9, part of a passage (Isa 40:1–11) that is set in the Prayer Book to be read on the Festival of St. John the Baptist, and that in the KJV has the chapter headings, "1 The promulgation of the Gospel. 3 The preaching of John Baptist. 9 The preaching of the Apostles. […]" The KJV of Isa 40:9 reads, "O Zion, that bringest good tydings, get thee up into the high mountaine: O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voyce with strength, lift it up, be not afraid: say unto the cities of Iudah; Behold your God." However, the KJV also gives a marginal reading for the opening phrases of each part of the verse: "O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion … O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem"; and this is the version of the text that Jennens used in *Messiah*. In terms of the Hebrew, the main text version of the KJV ("O Zion/Jerusalem that bringest good tidings") is clearly the more accurate translation: the imperatives in the rest of Isa 40:9 are all in the feminine singular, making their logical subject either Zion or Jerusalem in line with the Hebrew convention that cities are conceptualized in feminine terms; and the one telling good tidings is represented in each case by the feminine singular participle *měbaśśeret*, indicating again that the natural subject of the participle is either Zion or Jerusalem. But this is somewhat at odds with the KJV's metatextual interpretation of the verse as referring to the apostles' preaching, an interpretation that seems to arise from the LXX and Vulgate. The LXX renders the Hebrew feminine participial phrases *měbaśśeret ṣîyyôn* and *měbaśśeret yĕrûšālaim* with masculine participles: *ho euangelizomenos siōn* and *ho euangelizomenos Ierousalēm*, which implies that the one doing the spreading of good news is masculine. The Vulgate retains the feminine forms, but structures the sentence in a way that implies a subject-object relationship between the one preaching and the one being preached to: *tu quae euangelizas Sion*, … *quae euangelizas Hierusalem*. And so the KJV translators try to have their cake and eat it, so to speak, retaining the grammatically correct rendition of the Hebrew in the main text of their translation but also adding the marginal reading that reflects the ancient versions and facilitates the metatextual interpretation of apostles preaching to Jerusalem. It is hardly surprising, then, that Jennens adopted the marginal reading for use in *Messiah*: it allowed him to link the passage as clearly as possible with the events surrounding the coming of Christ.

The evident debate in the minds of the KJV translators over the meaning of the Hebrew in Isa 40:9 brings us to another issue relating to christological interpretation of the Old Testament texts from the KJV used in

Messiah, namely, that such interpretations are at times based on christologizing translations of an obscure or corrupt Hebrew *Vorlage*. This is the case for one of the most famous items in *Messiah*, "I know that my redeemer liveth," which stands at the beginning of part 3 and is taken from Job 19:25–26. The KJV is convinced that these two verses refer to the general eschatological resurrection, hence the translation of them that is so familiar: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." The KJV chapter heading here indicates a similar understanding: "23 [Job] beleeveth the resurrection." Earlier English translations also display a broadly similar understanding of the verses.[13]

But the Hebrew here is notoriously difficult to interpret, with its talk of a living redeemer standing on the earth/ground, and of skin and destruction and seeing God. The KJV translators, like their sixteenth-century predecessors, approached the text from a christological point of view, and saw in it a reference to the last judgment; hence the reference to worms destroying the body, which is a translators' addition to try and make sense of the Hebrew in the light of their eschatological understanding of it. But what the verses appear to be talking about when viewed strictly in their own context is something different from the general resurrection at the end of time. The references to skin and destruction in Job 19:26 most probably indicate the dreadful skin disease with which Job has been struck, rather than postmortem decay of the body; and what Job is looking for is legal vindication before God, brought about by means of a redeemer or an advocate of some kind, so that he can be declared innocent of the wrongdoing that his sufferings would seem to imply.[14] Hence the KJV's christologizing interpretation of Job 19:25–26 is not altogether justifiable on the basis of the Hebrew text. But that interpretation has been immortalized not least by the passage's use in *Messiah* in seamless conjunction with a cleverly amended 1 Cor 15:20: "For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep,"[15] and by Handel's equally seamless musical setting of the two passages as if they were one.

Not that the underlying Hebrew need be particularly obscure for a christianizing translation to occur. Psalm 68:11 is a verse used in part 2 of *Messiah* to depict the apostles going out throughout the world to spread the gospel. "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of the preachers!" declares the oratorio confidently, and follows it up with material from Isa 52/Rom 10:18: "How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth good

tidings." Although the wording of Ps 68:11 as used in the oratorio is from the Prayer Book Coverdale Psalter rather than the KJV, it is sufficiently similar to the KJV to be worth discussing in this context. The KJV for Ps 68:11 reads, "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it." The KJV metatext to Ps 68 also points to the psalm's supposed Christian significance: part of the psalm heading reads, "7 [An exhortation to praise God] for his care of the Church," and the page heading reads, "God's power in his Church." However, both the Coverdale and the KJV translations of Ps 68:11 obscure the fact that the Hebrew word denoting the ones proclaiming the message is a feminine plural participle; in other words, these "preachers" are women. This is recognized by the Geneva Bible in its translation of the verse: "The Lord gave matter to the women to tell of the great armie." The Geneva Bible was famed for its explanatory notes, and the note that accompanies this startling verse reads, "The facion then was, that women sang songs after the victorie, as Miriam, Deborah, Judith and others." As an explanation it makes perfect sense. Psalm 68 as a whole describes how God goes forth as a warrior from Zion to scatter his and his people's enemies, and 68:12 speaks of kings and armies fleeing and people dividing the spoil; so it is highly likely that 68:11 with its preaching women is referring to the well-established custom of women singing to celebrate their menfolk's victory in battle. Here, of course, the battle has been won by God, and so this is why the Lord is said to give "matter" to the women to sing.

But this is a long way away from the associations that Ps 68 has in the Prayer Book, where it is set to be read on Whit Sunday (Pentecost), and assumed to refer to the apostles who carry the gospel throughout the world. The Whitsun association and interpretation seems to have been encouraged by a number of elements: one is the use of Ps 68:18 in Eph 4:8 to indicate the gifts given by Christ to his church after his ascension—a reference to the events of Whitsun and the gift of the Holy Spirit.[16] Another may well be the use of the term *euangelizomenois* in the LXX to render the feminine plural participle in the Hebrew, a rendition that at a stroke changes Ps 68:11 from a picture of women celebrating a victory to one of men preaching the gospel—at least, in the eyes of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Christians whose interpretive framework for the whole of the Old Testament was christological. And so the KJV's translation (and interpretation) of Ps 68:11, like the Coverdale translation before it and Jennens's subsequent use of the verse in his messianic schema, is on strictly logical grounds illegitimate. But as is the case for the other textual

examples discussed here, it provides clear evidence of the christological framework within which the KJV translators were operating in their renditions of the Old Testament, and their understanding was encapsulated in and perpetuated by Jennens's libretto.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of the skill of Jennens's textual juxtapositions of KJV texts that add to his messianic message. For example, Hag 2:6–7 and Mal 3:1 are seamlessly juxtaposed in order to show that the "desire of all nations" in Hag 2:7 is the Messiah, "the Lord, whom you seek," who "will suddenly come to his Temple" in the words of Malachi. And Isa 53:3 is juxtaposed with Isa 50:6 to give a picture of the events of the crucifixion—he was despised and rejected, a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief; he gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, he hid not his face from shame and spitting. Who would ever think that those texts do not belong together? Or the assertion that "thou didst not leave his soul in hell, nor suffer thy holy one to see corruption"—from Ps 16:10 or Acts 2:27 (Peter's sermon at Pentecost), but actually from neither in its present form, because the original quotation is in the future tense and the first person singular—"thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol"—and is from the Coverdale translation, not the KJV.

In the end, then, far from *Messiah* being a simple presentation of self-evident Christian truth that springs from the pages of the Bible in general and the KJV in particular, it can be seen to be a very carefully crafted work that uses the KJV as a baseline but that does not hesitate to depart from it when the requisite messianic meaning is not immediately clear from the KJV text. Having said that, though, the KJV itself is quite adept at bringing out a christological meaning for many Old Testament texts, whether by means of its actual translations or via the metatext that accompanies the translation. King James may have eschewed Geneva Bible–style marginal notes for his new translation as an aid to understanding the text, but that is not to say that the readers of the KJV were to be left entirely to their own devices in coming to an understanding of the text.

Notes

1. Charles Jennens to Edward Holdsworth, quoted in Donald Burrows, *Handel: Messiah* (Cambridge Music Handbooks; 1991; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 11.

2. Handel's biblical oratorios included *Esther* (1720), *Deborah* (1733), *Saul* (1738),

Israel in Egypt (1739), *Joseph and His Brethren* (1744), *Judas Maccabaeus* (1745), *Belshazzar* (1745), and *Joshua* (1748).

3. See Ruth Smith, *Handel's Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 148–52.

4. For this view see John H. Roberts, "Christ of the Playhouse: Indirect Narrative in Handel's *Messiah*," *Händel-Jahrbuch* 55 (2009): 107–24.

5. See the account given by Donald Burrows of *Messiah*'s first London performance, in *Handel: Messiah*, 23–31, esp. 25–27.

6. There are 45 verses or parts of verses from the OT used in *Messiah*. Of these texts, 13 are quoted directly and at least 5 more are alluded to in the NT; this means that at least a third of the texts in *Messiah* have Christian or christological associations going back to the foundational documents of Christianity. The OT texts used in *Messiah* that are quoted in the NT are Isa 40:3–5; Hag 2:6; Isa 7:14; Isa 9:2; Zech 9:9; Ps 22:8; 16:10; 68:18; Isa 52:7; and Ps 2:1–2. Old Testament texts used in *Messiah* that are alluded to in the NT include Isa 35:5–6 (though see the discussion below on this text); 53:4, 6; and Ps 22:7.

7. Geoffrey Cuming, "The Text of 'Messiah,'" *Music & Letters* 31 (1950): 226–30.

8. One such text is Isa 35:5–6, which is discussed below. Another is Hag 2:7, used quite early in part 1 of *Messiah*, in which the phrase "the desire of all nations" is understood to refer to the Messiah. Although there is nothing in the chapter and page headings of the KJV to guide readers into such an interpretation, the Bishops' Bible contains at this point the marginal comment, "there passed 519 yeeres after this prophecie, before Christ came," thereby implying that the phrase was to be understood as referring to the Messiah. The Geneva Bible in its marginal explanatory notes explicitly equates the desire of all nations with the Messiah, although admits the alternative possibility that the phrase may refer to precious objects: in reference to the term *desire* it says, "Meaning, Christ whome all ought to looke for and desire: or by desire, he may signifie all precious things, and riches and such like."

9. Although King James strictly forbade the inclusion of polemical commentary like those found in the notes of the Calvinist and antimonarchial Geneva Bible, the rules for the translators did allow for marginal notes that further explained Hebrew and Greek words that could not "without some circumlocution so briefly and fully be expressed in the text." The KJV does therefore have a number of marginal notes that suggest alternate readings for some difficult texts. For more on the marginal notes of the KJV, see above in this volume, 169–79.

10. See Matt 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23. The wording used by the Gospel writers is adopted from the LXX of Isa 40:3: *Phōnē boōntos en tē erēmō, hetoimasate tēn hodon kyriou* (a voice of one calling in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord)—but their interpretation of the wording as referring to someone in the wilderness calling for the way of the Lord to be prepared, rather than as someone calling for the way of the Lord to be prepared in the wilderness, is dependent upon the NT context of John the Baptist.

11. For discussion of the Immanuel prophecy in Isa 7:14 and its meaning, see R. E. Clements, *Isaiah 1–39* (New Century Bible; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1980), 85–89; John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1–33* (Word Biblical Commentary 24; Waco,

Tex.: Word, 1985), 95–104; Christopher R. Seitz, *Isaiah 1–39* (Interpretation; Louisville: Knox, 1993), 60–75, 78–79; Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (Old Testament Library; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 60–69. Although both Watts (*Isaiah 1–33,* 97, 98–99) and Childs (*Isaiah,* 66) regard the Hebrew *ʿalmâ* as having connotations of virginity, neither sees Isa 7:14 as referring to the birth of Jesus; as Watts points out, this christological interpretation of the verse is dependent on a tradition of exegesis in which "[v]erses were abstracted from both the historical and literary setting in which they originally appeared" (*Isaiah 1–33,* 104). Without such a tradition of exegesis, it is exceedingly difficult to justify a christological interpretation.

12. Although not a direct quotation, Matt 11:5 probably alludes to Isa 35:5–6.

13. The Geneva Bible has, "For I am sure, that my Redeemer liveth, and he shall stand the last on the earth, And though after my skin [wormes] destroy this [body,] yet I shall see God in my flesh." The Bishops' Bible renders the verses, "For I am sure that my redeemer liveth, and that I shal rise out of the earth in the latter day, and shal be covered againe with my skinne, and shall see God in my flesh."

14. For detailed discussion of these extremely difficult verses and a range of opinions on their interpretation, see Norman C. Habel, *The Book of Job* (Old Testament Library; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985), 290–91, 292–94, 303–9; J. Gerald Janzen, *Job* (Interpretation; Atlanta: Knox, 1985), 134–45; David J. A. Clines, *Job 1–20* (Word Biblical Commentary 17; Dallas: Word, 1989), 428, 457–66.

15. In its own context 1 Cor 15:20 begins, "*But* now is Christ risen," rather than "*For* now is Christ risen." Changing the wording from "But" to "For," as Jennens does, allows 1 Cor 15:20 to be linked to Job 19:25–26 as an affirmation of the resurrection of the dead, thereby interpreting Job's expression of hope in the light of Christ's resurrection, even though at a strictly logical level the verses have nothing to do with each other.

16. Ps 68:18 too is used in *Messiah*, in the item "Thou art gone up on high."

America's King of Kings: The King James Bible and American Civil Religion

Jon Pahl

> First *Moloch*, horrid King besmear'd with blood
> Of human sacrifice, and parents tears,
> Though, for the noyse of Drums and Timbrels loud,
> Their children's cries unheard that passed through fire
> To his grim Idol.
>
> —John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (Book 1, 392–396)

The 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Version of the Bible has given rise to many fine appreciations of the text and its influence.[1] There is no reason to gainsay these appreciations. The text does, often, dignify English with a singular sonorous sublimity. Yet the question I would like to consider today is less aesthetic than political. That is, what is the connection between the KJV and the emergence on the global stage of what I call, in my most recent book, an American empire of sacrifice?[2] Put more prosaically: Are there historical links between the KJV and what scholars recognize as the American civil religion? Put most bluntly: Is the KJV in some way responsible for the "permanent war" that emerged as U.S. practice (if not policy) over the course of the twentieth century?[3]

My argument will proceed in three steps. I will, first, sketch very briefly what historians of American religion mean when we point to "civil religion," and then outline my own interpretation of it as productive of an American empire of sacrifice. Second, I will summarize, in a way cravenly shaped to my own argument, some key tropes—"king of kings," "glory," and "blessing"—in the KJV, about which I make no claims to be an expert. Finally, I will bring together parts 1 and 2 to contend that in the caldron of American history the King James Bible has contributed (note well that modest term) to a theology of monarchical glory that has produced

(through the broader system of the civil religion) an ethos or spirituality that I call "innocent domination." In this ethos (we might call it the "civil theology" of the civil religion) Americans must sacrifice (more about that word later) to insure God's blessing and to secure national glory. But, because the sacrifice is offered through "one nation, under God," any violence that is enacted does not reveal malice on the part of those doing the violence, and (in fact) the sacrifice *justifies* dominance under a rubric that holds that transcendent right makes military might, or that piety produces power. In sum, one function of the KJV of the Bible in the context of American democracy has been to translate the divine right of kings into the divine rights of a nation and its people, with all the privileges thereunto appertaining. America's King of Kings can be found in the distinctive cadences and tropes of the King James Bible, in the service of the American civil religion and its innocent domination.

The American "Empire of Sacrifice"

As scholars have been demonstrating for a half century now, since Robert Bellah resuscitated Rousseau's concept of a civil religion, devotion to the nation operates through and alongside traditional religions in America (and especially through evangelical Protestantism) to project unto the nation a transcendent origin ("one nation under God") and a transcendent horizon ("God bless America!").[4] This hybrid civil religion is associated with sacred symbols such as the flag, Declaration of Independence, and Constitution; with holy days such as Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Veterans Day, and Thanksgiving; and with sacred sites such as Civil War battlefields, the national monuments and memorial shrines in Washington, D.C., and (most recently) the World Trade Center, Pentagon, and Flight 93 Memorials.

Now, linking these many symbols, holidays, and sacred sites is a system of sacrifice—a network of discourses, practices, and institutions that depend upon substitutions, exchanges, or destruction to produce favor or blessing, which is (I am willing to argue) what every sacrifice boils down to.[5] In *Empire of Sacrifice* I call the American form of this sacrificial system "innocent domination," or (sometimes) "blessed brutalities." That is, in the American civil religion the nation is an imagined community of largely innocent citizens ("the good guys") who through their willingness to give of themselves and to work hard (to "sacrifice") win victories that allow Americans to dominate enemies ("the bad guys"). Americans win,

so the logic goes, because we have a moral or religious right to do so, and because in our domination we bear no malice toward those dominated. Succinctly put, the doctrine at the core of innocent domination is: transcendent right makes military might, or, perhaps, even more succinctly, piety produces power. This *mentalité* was once dubbed "Manifest Destiny"; it now often bears the name "American Exceptionalism."

And insofar as this system of sacrifice encourages self-*criticism,* intentional altruism, and organized cooperation on behalf of the common good, it is indeed admirable.[6] There is nothing inherently good or evil about a civil religion. But throughout American history the structure of the sacrifices and, even more, those who are the *victims* of sacrificial processes are often unexamined. Put another way, the victims of innocent domination appear to emerge from historical contingencies that render the application of power over these victims largely arbitrary (and therefore, with the wisdom of historical hindsight, unjust). Innocent domination in the American civil religion has a way of becoming what Robert Jewett has called "zealous nationalism."[7] The result, a decade after 9/11, is that we end up with a costly two-front (if not global) war against a remarkably diffuse enemy, "terror," in which we employ not only conventional weaponry but surveillance, drones, smart bombs, renditions, and torture that belie any assertions of innocence or that expose as hypocritical any civil religious mythology that right makes might or piety produces power.

Yet if the fruits of this kind of sacrificial system are increasingly bitter on a global stage, its roots are also deep in American history. Harvard's president Drew Gilpin Faust has brilliantly shown how memorializing Civil War dead "created the modern American nation" around "sacrifice" in the mid-nineteenth century—a topic to which we shall return.[8] Even earlier, versions of America's nascent civil religion imagined a mythology of "civilized" white (Christian) purity that promoted the sacrifice of those who were constructed as racially and religiously other and impure—notably the indigenous peoples of North America, and West Africans brought to America as slaves. It is surely worth noting, in passing, how historically slippery the categories of scapegoats over and against whom solidarity is constructed can be. Among those deemed unworthy to be included in the benefits of innocent (white) domination in America were (at one time or another) Italian, Irish, or (almost any other) Catholics; Germans (during World War I); Asians, first exploited as laborers, then excluded by law, then interred, if they were Japanese (during World War II); and Jews (repeatedly)—to name only a few.

If race, ethnicity, and religion have been one cluster of categories around which victims have tended to be created in American history, gender is another. As is well known, but easy to forget, women were systematically excluded from full participation in early American society through English common laws of coverture that had theological sanction. Consequently, when the first wave of feminists (like Elizabeth Cady Stanton) began to assert their rights they ran into some serious religious resistance. Today, those whose sexual orientation is different from the heterosexual norm join women in having experienced silencing, segregation, and the sacrifice of their economic and civil rights in the ostensible interest to "protect" (what an "innocent" term!) marriage, through DOMA laws (currently on the books in thirty-eight states) and other policies that appear quite patently to construct a political solidarity over and against what will always be a relatively fragile minority. I could go on—to talk about the war on drugs (which is basically a way to sacrifice young black males), or the war on so-called Islamofascism (which is how some in America still see the legacy of 9/11)—but I hope the point is clear. The unexamined sacrifices of innocent domination in the American civil religion have deep roots, and bitter fruits, in American history.

Key Tropes in the KJV

Now to turn to the text of the KJV itself; I want to pay attention to three key tropes in the story. A trope is simply a rhetorical device that changes the meaning of words. There are, it is sometimes agreed upon, four common tropes to which all others reduce—metaphor, metonymy, irony, and synecdoche.[9] All four, of course, are amply attested in the KJV, but my suggestion is that a fundamental synecdoche is at work in the translation. A synecdoche is, in one of its forms, a figure of speech that substitutes a part for the whole. "Gray beard" for "an old man" is one example. "Glasses" for "spectacles" is another. In synecdoche, one of the elements of an object is taken to represent the entire object. The latter example also points up one of the difficulties, or perhaps one of the benefits, of synecdoche: the substitution can become so engrained in the culture, so "normal," that one forgets that it is a substitution.

It is fairly well known that James I had political purposes for initiating the translation that came, colloquially, to bear his name. James wanted a Bible free of the antimonarchical glosses of the Geneva Bible of 1560.[10] His purposes were not entirely self-interested. He also wanted

a translation that would bring together the various factions in his kingdom. It was hardly the first time that political solidarity had been sought through the Christian religion. Constantine had envisioned the same through the Council at Nicaea, and of course emperors and popes and princes had been contending over the control of the symbols of Christianity for well over a millennia by the time James got a chance to put his stamp on the process. But by the seventeenth century the impetus behind James's project had heightened stakes. The Renaissance-Reformation tradition of what Anthony Grafton has called "worlds made by words" had transformed translation into a life-and-death proposition.[11] The era from the late fifteenth through the eighteenth century was one that invested words with an almost magical, incantatory power. The Renaissance emphasis on philology, the Reformation emphasis on *sola scriptura* (and confessionalization), and the Enlightenment emphasis on law all shared in relocating the power of the sacred away from the supernatural (and, of course, away from the institutional hierarchy of the Catholic Church) and into the "sacred" power of language. This *relocation* of religion is a more accurate understanding of "secularization" than simple decline, as Charles Taylor has so vividly shown.[12] In the modern world, religions have to give reasons for their authority. James (understandably) thought a new translation of the Bible was an effort worth undertaking to bolster his kingly authority.

On one level, that effort failed rather miserably. James's son, Charles I, was beheaded by the Puritans in a grisly ceremony of kingly scapegoating that was quite the opposite of what James could have intended, although such a fate was no doubt something he might have imagined for himself. Beheading, especially of nobility, was all the rage among so-called Christians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. John Bunyan vividly depicted just such a scene during his time in prison when he imagined the beheading of "Gyant Despair" by the virtuous Christians who were progressing their way to glory.[13] Bunyan's famous allegory—it was right up there with the Bible in number of printings in early America—not only shows how violence can be justified on behalf of a virtuous vision, but also allows us to make a transition from Jacobean England to three tropes from the KJV that I see as central in the American civil religion. They are, in the order I will address them: "king of kings," "glory," and "blessing." My point, again, is this: the central synecdoche in the King James Bible is a theology of monarchical glory (substituting the part—the metaphor of God as king—for the whole revelation of Scripture) that gradually came (as the

nation took shape) to reinforce American innocent domination and what is (today) an empire of sacrifice.

1. King of Kings

There is ambivalence in the Holy Bible about kingship that is impossible to elide, no matter how clever the interpreters. David is the paradigmatic case—although Solomon would also provide an interesting study. On the one hand, David represents the paradigm of the faithful king. He plans the temple as a home for the Lord, and (in the famous address to the assembly upon its dedication), gives credit where credit is due. The language from 1 Chr 29 is rich and worth quoting at some length:

> 10 Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed *be* thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.
> 11 Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*; thine *is* the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.
> 12 Both riches and honour *come* of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand *is* power and might; and in thine hand *it is* to make great, and to give strength unto all.
> 13 Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.
> 14 But who *am* I, and what *is* my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things *come* of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.
> 15 For we *are* strangers before thee, and sojourners, as *were* all our fathers: our days on the earth *are* as a shadow, and *there is* none abiding.
> 16 O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name *cometh* of thine hand, and *is* all thine own.
> 17 I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee.

What follows, in short order, are the sacrifices: "And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings unto the Lord, on the morrow after that day, *even* a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, *and* a thousand lambs, with their drink offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel" (29:21). This is, no doubt, the archetypal pattern that James

envisioned: a king humble before the Lord, sacrificing to the Lord, offering "all these things" to the Lord from "the uprightness of mine heart."

But, on the other hand, in David's case there was that thing with Bathsheba. The language again is magisterial, and worth hearing in all of its richness, from 2 Sam 12:

> 1 And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.
> 2 The rich *man* had exceeding many flocks and herds.
> 3 But the poor *man* had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.
> 4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.
> 5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, *As* the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this *thing* shall surely die:
> 6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.
> 7 And Nathan said to David, Thou *art* the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;
> 8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if *that had been* too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.
> 9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife *to be* thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.
> 10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.
> 11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give *them* unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.

Here kingship produces not blessing but curse—a dualism we shall encounter again. Bathsheba is, of course, a synecdoche herself, as Prophet

Nathan makes clear in his metonymy of the ewe. It is innocence that is lost through David's kingly usurpation of another's property. Shame follows the king's calculating conquest in the curse of public cuckolding, although it is less the scandal of sexuality than the consequentialist *violence* that follows from David's own unjust violence that is at the heart of the curse: "the sword will never depart from thine house."

The translators of the KJV attempted to resolve this biblical ambivalence about kingship by placing a consistent, and calculated, emphasis on kingly "majesty," as Laura Knoppers has recently shown in a persuasive close study.[14] I do not need to reiterate her research here, and the trope I want to explore in the KJV in any event is less "king" itself than "king of kings," מלכיא מלך (*melek malkayyā'*) in Aramaic and ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευόντων (*ho basileus tōn basileuontōn*) in Greek. The former phrase is translated as "king of kings" in the KJV in Dan 2:37. Daniel is about to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and prefaces his interpretation by offering: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory." Note well the continuity here between associations of kingship, power, glory, and so forth; the terms David had associated with God are now associated with Nebuchadnezzar as "king of kings." This flattering, yet ultimately subversive, attribution was not uncommon in the ancient Near East, where kings would consolidate territory by assuming the kingships of others—becoming kings of kings. This had been the case with Nebuchadnezzar, who conquered Jerusalem in 597 B.C.E., and who destroyed the city and took many of its residents into exile in Babylon in 587.

Daniel's title for Nebuchadnezzar, however, was ironic. For as he goes on to detail in his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, all emperors have clay feet and eventually fall. The "glory" that Nebuchadnezzar imagined as his own was in fact an illusion, unless it was recognized as a gift rather than as a possession. Yet, in the very next chapter of Daniel, the "king of kings" tries to centralize his kingdom around the worship of an idol. This leads him (as is well known) to attempt to throw Daniel's associates Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into a fiery furnace, here a metaphor for the melting pot that was Babylonian culture. We shall return to this association between kingship and fire very shortly. But the three Israelites endure the flames unscathed, and Nebuchadnezzar's place in the biblical plot ends with him raving in the wilderness for seven years, after which he is restored by God, at which point the so-called king of kings concludes with a first-person confession: "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and

extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works *are* truth, and his ways judgment; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase" (Dan 4:37).

In the New Testament, "king of kings" appears three times—in 1 Tim 6:15, Rev 17:14, and 19:16. The first reference is at the conclusion of the letter (ch. 6). The author exhorts his listener, traditionally Timothy:

> 12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses [stem: μάρτυρ-].
> 13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and *before* Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;
> 14 That thou keep *this* commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:
> 15 Which in his times he shall shew, *who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;
> 16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen.

Implicit here is a contrast between the "blessed and only Potentate," the "King of kings and Lord of lords," the "only" one who hath immortality, "dwelling in the light," and so forth, and some unnamed usurper against whom Timothy must "fight." Structurally, this passage clearly identifies Timothy with Christ, and the usurper with Pontius Pilate, or perhaps more broadly (as much NT scholarship of late has been contending), with the Roman Empire.[15] Through the contrast he makes between the "King of kings" and any mere human Paul suggests that it is the empire against which Christians like Timothy must fight, and it is the empire before whom they must (in the tepid translation of μάρτυρ- favored in most, if not all, English versions) "witness."

In Rev 17, not surprisingly, Paul's contrast between the King of kings and another claimant to power becomes even clearer. Chapter 17 concerns the (in)famous "Whore of Babylon" who "sits upon a scarlet coloured beast." This woman is "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," and she is associated with "seven kings" who "have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." Then, in the crucial verse, "these shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings." The apocalypticist is never direct in associating Babylon with Rome, but the

final verse of the chapter comes very close to doing so, in the era of the *Pax Romana*: "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (17:18).

The final mention of "king of kings" appears in Rev 19, which again deserves quoting at length:

> 11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.
> 12 His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.
> 13 And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.
> 14 And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.
> 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.
> 16 And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

What follows is carnage. The beast is "cast alive into a lake of fire," and the armies of the beast are "slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse," after which the "fowls of the air … eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men," in a "supper of the great God" (19:18–20).

With such a grotesque and gluttonous scene behind us, we can now return to the theme of fire and light in association with kingship that we initially saw with Nebuchadnezzar, and begin to draw our conclusions about this trope. The Hebrew root for "king," מלך, *mlk*, appears in at least two other significant places in association with fire in the KJV, both in reference to the "king" (literally) whose name goes largely untranslated as Molech or Moloch. The first is in Lev 18:21: "And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech [*mlk*], neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD." The second is in the sermon of Stephen in Acts 7. Stephen has just accused his accusers of worshipping idols with "slain beasts and sacrifices," presumably thereby with fire, and then he goes on: "Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch [*mlk*] … which ye made to worship … and I will carry you away beyond Babylon" (7:41–43). Not surprisingly, Stephen himself is the one who gets carried away shortly

after uttering this threat, outside the city where he is stoned to death in the presence (the text informs us) of an approving young man named Saul.

Molech was, in short, a king/god who demanded human sacrifice—much as had been the case with the first (and ironic) king of kings, Nebuchadnezzar. And, with equal irony, Stephen's persecutors demonstrated *their* devotion to Molech through Stephen's sacrifice, through his martyrdom. And, in due course, with more than a little irony, first the Puritans, and then the American patriots in the British colonies, would revolt against their own kings (both Georges, interestingly), ostensibly on behalf of the King of kings. But that is to get ahead of things. It has been my modest intent, to this point, simply to point out these various associations that exist in the KJV's trope of "kingship" and, especially, "king of kings," between light and fire, sacrifice, and death, on the one hand, and honor, greatness, victories, and glory, on the other.[16] We can now turn to our second KJV trope, "glory."

2. Glory

"Glory" appears 371 times in the KJV as the translation of twenty different words—twelve in Hebrew and eight in Greek. Such a capacious term of course obscures a wide variety of shadings in the original terms. It would take us too far afield from our topic to explore all twenty, and the fact that "glory" was a catch-all term in the KJV is, in part, my point: its meaning could shift. Glory was mobile. There are five associations or distinct ways of using "glory" in the KJV that I would like briefly to highlight as we move toward understanding some of the relationships between the KJV and the American civil religion.

The first and most obvious use of "glory" in the KJV is in relationship to God. The Psalms are replete with examples. Psalm 24 is excellent for our purposes.

> 1 The earth *is* the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. …
> 7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.
> 8 Who *is* this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.
> 9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.
> 10 Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he *is* the King of glory. Selah.

The Hebrew term translated as "glory" here is כבוד, *kābôd*, usually pronounced "kaw-vodh," whose literal meaning is "heavy," but with a shading of "copious," "abundant," or even simply "important."[17] In many texts the visual manifestation of glory, when associated with God, is light or fire, as in Exod 24:17: "And the sight of the glory [*kbd*] of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel." We shall return to this important association between glory and fire or light later.

The second association with glory in the KJV is of an individual, or a group of individuals. Proverbs 3:35 is a good example: "The wise shall inherit glory [*kbd*]: but shame shall be the promotion of fools." In an infamous passage from 1 Corinthians, Paul conveys a similar meaning in advice about head covering in assembly, using the most common Greek term translated as "glory," δόξα (*doxa*, which literally means "opinion" or "belief," as in "orthodoxy" or "heterodoxy"): "For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory [*doxa*] of God: but the woman is the glory [*doxa*] of the man" (1 Cor 11:7). I have nothing to say about gender politics here; I merely want to point out the association of "glory" with an individual or group of individuals.

A third association of glory in the KJV is of objects. In Exodus, for instance, Moses is instructed to make "holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty" (Exod 28:2). This association of glory with objects is perhaps the most general use of the term. Isaiah is particularly fond of it. In Isa 10, a chapter of woe, where God's wrath is directed especially at the Assyrians, Isaiah imagines the day when

> 16 Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.
> 17 And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day;
> 18 And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standard-bearer fainteth.
> 19 And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them.

Here glory is associated not only with the Lord, but also with "his forest," and his "fruitful field."

Later in Isaiah (ch. 66), glory extends to Jerusalem, imagined as a mother of Israel, with full and flowing breasts:

> 8 Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? *or* shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.
> 9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut *the womb*? saith thy God.
> 10 Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:
> 11 That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.
> 12 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon *her* knees.
> 13 As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

This association between glory and objects—garments, forests, cities, even breasts—continues in the New Testament. Paul famously uses the term, and its mobility or variability, to explain the resurrection. He writes in 1 Cor 15:

> 35 But some *man* will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?
> 36 *Thou* fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:
> 37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other *grain*:
> 38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.
> 39 All flesh *is* not the same flesh: but *there is* one *kind of* flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, *and* another of birds.
> 40 *There are* also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial is another.
> 41 *There is* one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from *another* star in glory.
> 42 So also *is* the resurrection of the dead.

A fourth association of glory in the KJV, extending those of individuals, groups, and objects, is of nations. The prophets are particularly fond of making this association, often only to undermine it. Isaiah associates glory with Babylon, which is "the glory of kingdoms," only to assert that soon Babylon "shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah" (Isa 13:19) In Daniel it is the "glory of his kingdom" that returns to Nebuchadnezzar after his seven years of insanity, for which (in return) Nebuchad-

nezzar recognizes that the glory is, in the end, God's (Dan 4:37). And in a tricky verse, Micah imagines doom to the "glory of Israel," through an heir, or a conqueror, who shall lay waste to the land (Mic 1:15). As should be clear from these examples, this association between a nation and glory is generally negatively evaluated in the KJV. That is, any association between a nation and glory is fragile. Despite this tenuous association between a nation and glory, as we shall see it becomes (ironically) the chief avenue of the KJV's influence on the American civil religion.

Finally, and most fundamentally, "glory" refers *rhetorically* to an adjectival process. It is something attributed to, or characterizing, something else. Jeremiah is good at outlining the possibilities and their normative resolution: "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: 'But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD" (Jer 9:23–24). If glory is properly an adjectival process directed toward God, the prophets are well aware that it can come unhinged and turn inward. Hosea puts it this way: "As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame" (Hos 4:7). But it is the book of Habakkuk that poses perhaps the most intriguing insight into this adjectival process—call it glorying—for my purposes. The passage is found in chapter 2.

> 12 Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!
> 13 Behold, *is it* not of the LORD of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity?
> 14 For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.
> 15 Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to *him*, and makest *him* drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!
> 16 Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the LORD's right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing *shall be* on thy glory.
> 17 For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts, *which* made them afraid, because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

> 18 What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?
> 19 Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it *is* laid over with gold and silver, and *there is* no breath at all in the midst of it.
> 20 But the LORD *is* in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.

I should, I suppose, just end there—with an injunction to silence. So much for the trope of "glory."

3. Blessing

Our third and final trope, "bless" or "blessing," we can treat more quickly. The English root "bless" appears 463 times in the KJV, of which 359 are in the Hebrew Bible—with 92 in Psalms, 68 in Genesis, and 46 in Deuteronomy, the books where the term most frequently appears. The blessing of Abraham is perhaps the most famous in all of Scripture: "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen 12:2–3). The Hebrew root here, *brk*, as in ברכה (*bĕrākâ*, "blessing") appears in English to be a verb ("to bless") or noun ("blessing"), but in fact it, like "glory," is an adjectival process that refers less to what people do than to a quality of God's activity. A "blessing," then, like the one to Abraham, might appear to contain within it an imperial mandate. Claiming one's "blessing" would mean, for instance, claiming land. There is surely evidence of this reading of "blessing" in Scripture and in history.

But as the Abrahamic example also reveals, closely related to blessing, and in fact contained within it, is the possibility of its opposite—the curse. And it is this dualistic opposition that has been a crucial element in the American civil religion. Deuteronomy 11:26–28 puts it succinctly. God says: "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known." The American civil religion has oscillated, throughout its history, and sometimes within the

same individual, between confidence in God's blessing and fear of God's curse, without (generally speaking) any clear way to differentiate one from the other. More accurately, the American civil religion operates with every citizen claiming authority to offer her or his own criteria for recognizing a blessing, on the one hand, and a curse, on the other. In my concluding remarks I will return to this problem and offer my own modest resolution to the mix, but for now we can conclude this discussion of three key tropes in the KJV—king of kings, glory, and blessing—with the words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven" (Matt 5:44–45a).

The KJV's Theology of Monarchical Glory and the American Civil Religion

The theology of monarchical glory that I take to be central to the KJV as evident in the American civil religion has two primary marks. First, on a spatial axis the KJV's theology of monarchical glory promotes through the American empire of sacrifice what I have taken to calling thanatopophilia—a love of places of death. Many of the sacred places of the American civil religion exist to memorialize the sacrifices of those who "died to make us free." Consequently, and second, on a temporal axis the KJV's theology of monarchical glory paradoxically promotes a *denial* of death, or what we might call an escapist (as opposed to a prophetic) millennialism. The sacred times of the American civil religion are rapturous apocalypses of glorious (monarchical) appearing, as the title of one of the books in the *Left Behind* series puts it. The upshot of this interweaving of sacred space and sacred time in American public life is a system of cultural power in which solidarity is produced through the sacrifice of scapegoats (the language of "the scapegoat" being itself—interestingly—a KJV creation). Needless to say, the roots of these processes extend quite deeply beyond the singular influence of the King James Bible, and their bitter fruits now extend well beyond the borders of the United States. But in the brief time I have remaining I can trace just a few of the turning points, at least, from the seventeenth century to the present.

1. American Thanatopophilia

Ironically, initial credit (and/or blame) for the monarchical theology of glory in the American civil religion must go to the Puritans, a tribe against whom James imagined his Bible being a bulwark, but a tribe who, by and large, disdained James's effort in favor of the Geneva Bible. But we are talking here about long trajectories and not hair-splitting analyses of antiquarian influence, and there is no question that Puritan bibliophilia quickly became an ecumenical enterprise in which the KJV was as good as any, and definitely better than none. Literary historian Sacvan Bercovitch described the Puritan contribution to the American mind quite nicely. "In those obsessive verbal rituals the Puritans sought and found the answer to the problem of authority in a strange New World. Their solution was as simple as it was sweeping. They sanctified their society by the Bible's figures and types. … It amounted to an imperialism of the word unrivaled in modern times."[18]

Lest one think that Bercovitch's language of an "imperialism of the word" is too strong, let's turn now to an example—one of those turning points. We could start, effectively, with the case of the Pequot War of 1634–1638, or with King Philip's War of 1675–1676—both of which I have written about elsewhere.[19] But if we split the difference between these decades we can find an interesting case in the execution of four Quakers on Boston Common between 1659 and 1661, which I have also studied in closer detail in *Empire of Sacrifice*. The four Quakers, including most famously Mary Dyer, were hanged on Boston Common for the crime of being Quakers, that is, for not being Calvinists. In other words, the killing of the Quakers, while carried out by the magistrates, also was given a theological rationale: the sacrifices (for that is what the public executions amounted to) would preserve good commerce between the Puritans and their God. John Norton, the chief apologist for the Puritan cause, put it well in *The Heart of New-England Rent at the Blasphemies of the Present Generation,* the book he was commissioned to justify the ways of men to the public.[20] The execution of the Quakers, Norton offered, "may be looked upon as an Act which the court was forced unto … in defence of Religion, themselves, the Church, and this poor State and People." In other words, this was innocent killing. It was not that God required a state to do his business, of course. He could just as easily have smote the Quakers immediately through some special providence. But, Norton continued, "that God makes use of Civil power, consequently of man, is not from his

need of him, but his favor to him. Not from defect of power, but abundance of goodness."[21] Indeed, as Governor John Endecott, who approved the land grant to Norton in exchange for his book, tried to explain in a letter to King Charles II, newly restored to the crown, the Puritans killed the Quakers not only out of goodness, but in "all humility" and good "conscience." The Puritans, Endecott contended, merely "held the point of the sword" toward the Quakers, who in their "desperate turbulency" wittingly went "rushing themselves thereupon." The Quakers were, after all, "blasphemers" who questioned the Trinity, defamed Christ's divinity, and undermined the Scriptures with their dependence on an "inner light." To kill the Quakers, to get to the point, was an act of innocent domination to preserve what Endecott called "pure scripture worship."[22] The Puritans were innocent in their domination because they were, they were quite sure, agents of the glory of God, the King of kings.

And those killings in Boston were sacrifices—as surely as the public executions in Tenochtitlan by the Aztecs were sacrifices.[23] The killing of Quakers began with the burning of their books, escalated to imprisonment and torture (ear-cropping, tongue-boring, and whipping), and concluded with public hangings that were propped up with all of the theological and military ritual the Puritans could muster. Historian Carla Pestana was the first to surface how the Quaker hangings were surrounded from beginning to end by "military maneuvers" that far exceeded the normal procedures in public executions according to common law.[24] The Boston jail holding Quaker prisoners was surrounded by a night watch to enforce silence. A fence was built around the prison enclosure, both to keep out crowds and to contain communication with the prisoners. And on the day of execution, fully armed soldiers, complete with drummers, accompanied the procession of the damned through the city in a public spectacle. The executions of the Quakers, in short, were sacrifices in a civil religion.

And they were rationalized through the Bible's key tropes of blessing, glory, and (indirectly) kingship. The Puritan claim to preserve "pure scripture worship" was predicated on the idea, underneath the very construction of the KJV, that ideological or symbolic unanimity was crucial for social order. Norton put the ideal like this: New England would be a place where "all orders and persons amongst us respectively, sanctifie God according to the prescript of Scripture, and [thereby] … in the regular exercise whereof, we may secure ourselves of a greater blessing than the adversary threatens trouble."[25] Note well how Norton invoked "blessing" here. This was dubious Protestant theology at best: to imagine that human

works (even if wrapped in the very fabric of Scripture) could secure any blessing from the sovereign God was to make God's blessing contingent upon the foibles of human free will—something that would be argued over obsessively in early America, as I showed in my first book, *Paradox Lost: Free Will and Political Liberty in American Culture, 1630–1760*. But Norton was not the first, or the last, to claim the mantle of orthodoxy to justify violence against an adversary. And it worked because the adversary the Puritans imagined they were fighting was not mere flesh and blood, and the battle was not just about words, but was about glory and who was really on the throne: "Though the Beast blasphemeth," Norton put it, in terms that were drawn precisely from the glorious battle of the King of kings against the antichrist, "the witnesses overcame." The irony, of course, is that it is today Mary Dyer—one of those Whore of Babylon-like devotees of the Beast, in Norton's worldview, who is remembered as "a witness to religious freedom" in a statue on Boston Common. And Norton, by and large forgotten, we might remember, by way of concluding this brief discussion of a turning point in the emergence of a theology of monarchical glory in America, as one of many to lose his soul, at least temporarily, to Moloch, because he sanctioned violence against innocents under the illusion of transcendent right, or while imagining worshipping the "King of kings."

But, of course, sacrifices in the proto-American civil religion were hardly only Puritan practices. On another end of what we might see as a spiritual-secular continuum in the civil religion were those figures, or that tribe, called "the Enlightenment Philosophes." Members of this genteel-appearing tribe such as Benjamin Franklin may have worshipped at an Anglican establishment like Christ Church in Philadelphia, but their loyalties lay in reason as well as in revelation.[26] Many of these so-called Founding Fathers have had their religious lives invoked, and often misinterpreted, ad nauseam. So I will turn instead to one of the less well known examples from among the many who helped to forge the civil theology of monarchical glory in its Enlightenment strain.

Philadelphian Elizabeth Griscom was born in 1752 of Quaker parents, fell in love with the son of a rector at Christ Church, Philadelphia, and eloped with him to New Jersey in 1773, where the couple was married by Benjamin Franklin's son, William, at Hugg's Tavern. Elizabeth and her husband, John, formed an upholstery business in Philadelphia, and worshipped together at Christ Church until John's untimely death during the Revolutionary War in January 1776. Shortly thereafter, according to Eliza-

beth's own report, at least, and definitely according to American legend, she was visited by General George Washington and two other "patriots" and asked to sew the first flag for the budding nation. We know her, of course, as Betsy Ross.[27]

The religion of this enlightened woman was a fluid thing. Raised Quaker, her elopement and marriage in a tavern indicates a sympathy with "infidel" tendencies that created an irrevocable break with her Quaker family and led to her being "read out" of the Quaker meeting. Her worship at Christ Church of course put her quite firmly in the center of a community that featured the enlightened presence of Benjamin Franklin and George Washington, to name only a few of the soon-to-be-immortal philosophes. In 1777 when she remarried, to sea captain John Ashburn, the ceremony was held at Old Swedes (Gloria Dei Lutheran) Church. After Ashburn, too, lost his life in the Revolutionary War, Elizabeth married a third time—to John Claypoole, in 1783, this ceremony being held at Christ Church. Somewhere in the intervening years Elizabeth also rejoined the Quakers, but in the branch known as the "fighting Quakers" for their support of the war effort. The reasons for this religious variability are not entirely clear, although they do reveal more than a share of Enlightened tolerance. But the effects of Betsy Ross's piety are not at all uncertain. By legend if not actual fact (and the former can definitely be as powerful as the latter) she produced through her labor and legacy (which included more than a touch of self-promotion and nineteenth-century Republican piety)—the single most visible symbol of the theology of monarchical glory as filtered through the cauldron of American democracy. It even bears a theological name; a vestige drawn directly from the KJV's most mobile trope: "Old Glory."[28] And there we have our second turning point: the nation now has a theologically laden symbol at its center, whose destruction is widely regarded (including efforts to establish a constitutional amendment against its burning) as "desecration," or the destruction of the sacred.

The sacred symbolism of the stars on the flag is particularly significant for our purposes.[29] Kings in the early modern world were often associated with astronomical bodies. Louis XIV, the "sun-king," is perhaps the best-known example, but James I himself was called "the new sun" upon his accession to the throne. But this association between kings and light, and more to the point, sovereignty and stars, was not coincidental—it was reinforced by the KJV and the association between glory and light. Stars were symbols of God's power in Scripture. And what happened in Amer-

ica was that this association between kingship and light was translated into the thirteen stars on "Old Glory." As the resolution before the Continental Congress put it, on June 14, 1777, that "the Flag of the thirteen United States, be Thirteen Stripes, alternate red and white; That the Union be Thirteen Stars, white in a Blue Field, representing a new Constellation." The stars signaled a new kind of sovereignty, but yet a reflection of the old. The divine right of kings had been transferred to a new constellation—the state. This Enlightenment symbolism, reinforced by Copernican science, and woven (by legend if not fact) by Elizabeth Griscom, reflected the basic synecdoche in the KJV. The nation is now *the* light in which we see light.

So, in the proto-history of the American civil religion, two broad streams come together: Puritan and Enlightenment, or what we might call Bible and Nature. Perry Miller, whose eloquent writing on early America inspired me to its study several decades ago, noted that the central tension linking Bible and Nature was a problem in the matter of Christian freedom:

> It is a hard conundrum … [this] liberty of the Christian. … In Protestantism it has always taken the form of paradox. As Luther put it, the Christian is master of all, the Christian is servant of all. Our straightforward America has never been comfortable in the presence of paradox, refuses to allow that in our history there has been any trace of it, and becomes enraged when confronted with antinomy. … The paradox is so hazardous to live with that [we] constantly seek a more plausible, a less torturing freedom. … [But] a horrible thought keeps intruding itself. … The two powers whom we had supposed contending for the allegiance of America, both chanting the slogan of freedom—both the Bible and Nature—turn out to have been hand-in-glove behind the scene.[30]

It is this hand-in-glove relationship between the KJV and America—and its concentration in sacrifice—that emerged, or was preserved, during the Civil War—our third turning point. Several important monographs by leading historians of late have tracked the ways religion and the nineteenth-century Republic were integrally connected. Yale's Harry Stout, in *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War*, documented how "the clergy were virtually cheerleaders all" for the war, using the KJV to support their respective sides.[31] And according to Faust,

> Shared suffering would override persisting differences about the meanings of race, citizenship, and nationhood to establish sacrifice and

> its memorialization as the ground on which North and South would ultimately reunite. … Sacrifice and the state became inextricably intertwined. … Death created the modern American union—not just by ensuring national survival, but by shaping enduring national structures and commitments.[32]

In the course of the War between the States over 600,000 soldiers joined the six million and more slaves—and the Quakers and Pequots and Mohegans and Cherokee and more—who had been sacrificed to Moloch to found the Republic.

But it was out of the Civil War that came one of the most enduring hymns of the civil religion: "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Julia Ward Howe was, by her own accounting at least, a daily Scripture reader. And the cadences and tropes of the KJV give the hymn its dignity and depth, across all six verses (I will share with you only the first and last):

> Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
> He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
> He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:
> His truth is marching on.
>
> CHORUS:
> Glory, glory, hallelujah!
> Glory, glory, hallelujah!
> Glory, glory, hallelujah!
> His truth is marching on. …
>
> He is coming like the glory of the morning on the wave,
> He is Wisdom to the mighty, He is Succour to the brave,
> So the world shall be His footstool, and the soul of Time His slave,
> Our God is marching on.
>
> CHORUS[33]

This hymn asserts, of course, that God is with the Union Army. Indeed, the King of kings of the book of Revelation *is* the Union army, and "the world shall be His footstool, and the soul of Time his slave." God is *marching*.[34] This hymn deserves a closer historical-critical reading for its theological significance (it appears ironically, for instance, in no less than nine KKK songbooks)—but I trust I have made its reliance upon the cadences and tropes of the KJV evident enough for the present discussion.[35]

In practice, as Faust argues, this theology of monarchical glory—the King of kings *marches* toward victory—has come to be associated with

memorialization of the dead, initially in speeches such as the Gettysburg Address, and in perpetuity through battlefields and other memorials. My fellow American religious historian Edward Tabor Linenthal has profiled the role of battlefields as sacred space in the American civil religion, so I do not need to replicate that research here.[36] Even closer to our own time, however, in what has clearly been a turning point whose outcome is still uncertain, we can note the uproar over the construction of memorials associated with 9/11 as a sign of how significant, and contested, sacred space can be.

And ubiquitous at all of these sacred places in the American civil religion is a phenomenon I have taken to calling *thanatopophilia*—a love of places of death. This neologism of *thanatopophilia* combines the insights of two scholars. The first, of course, is Freud—who posited that a death wish, *thanatos*, competes with a life wish, *eros*, in every human being. Whatever you think of Freud's larger theory, this tension surely makes sense in light of humanity's deep streak of self-destructiveness.[37] The second scholar is Yi Fu Tuan, who is a humanistic geographer who coined the term *topophilia*, which combined the Greek words for "place" and for "love" to describe the "love of place."[38] Tuan thought this was a good thing—and I am inclined to agree, as I suggest in *Shopping Malls and Other Sacred Spaces*.[39] But, with Freud, I also think it matters what *kinds* of places one remembers or loves. And for Americans since the Civil War it has almost been the default position to declare places of death and destruction, such as the 9/11 sites, the only legitimate sacred sites. There is something to be said for this tendency for remembering the fallen: it does keep us focused on the way "freedom isn't free," as the bumper sticker has it. But it can also obscure the existence of other sacred places—churches, synagogues, mosques—that exist for the living, and that support what Harvard sociologist Robert Putnam has called "American grace," rather than either blessing or curse on the nation. A robust society has many kinds of sacred spaces, reflecting the many ways to the Unconditioned among the human community.[40]

2. American Escapist Millennialism

To reiterate: my contention is that the operative civil theology behind the sacred places of American *thanatopophilia* is a theology of monarchical glory that demands sacrifice on behalf of the nation, and that the KJV contributed to the formation of this theology. Paradoxically, however, it

also seems evident to me that this theology of glory does not lead to a realistic recognition of the limits of mortality, but leads instead to an escapist millennialism predicated on the denial of death, as Ernest Becker put it.[41] In the typical American eschatology, in short, it is as if all those who died never really died, or rather, it is as if through memorialization of those who died to "make us free" *we* will never have to die. What Robert Jay Lifton calls "symbolic immortality," in short, is the upshot of the American theology of monarchical glory, on a temporal axis.[42]

The origins of this way of thinking about America are also deep, and once again intertwine Puritan and Enlightenment threads that many scholars have attempted to untangle.[43] The role of millennialism in American exceptionalism is widely recognized—from Puritan providentialism to the "heavenly city" of progress imagined by eighteenth-century philosophers. But the example I would like to concentrate on briefly here is known as pseudobiblicism, which is the construction of literary sources—and especially American histories—in the style and cadences of the King James Bible. The best-known example of the pseudobiblical style is, of course, the *Book of Mormon*. A brief sample from the first chapter will make the point. The passage describes the vision of Lehi, father of Nephi, in the first year of Zedekiah, king of Judah:

> Wherefore it came to pass that my father, Lehi, as he went forth prayed unto the Lord, yea, even with all his heart, in behalf of his people. And it came to pass as he prayed unto the Lord, there came a pillar of fire and dwelt upon a rock before him; and he saw and heard much; and because of the things which he saw and heard he did quake and tremble exceedingly.

Historian of American religions Philip Barlow clarifies the significance of such language: "The Jacobean language of the Bible, reverberating also through the *Book of Mormon*, functions as a special, sacred language, signaling the existence of a sacred zone."[44] More succinctly, the glory of God came to America in the sacred time recorded in the *Book of Mormon*, which is, as the official Latter-day Saints website puts it, "the history [of] God's dealings with the people who lived in the Americas between approximately 600 B.C. and 400 A.D."[45]

But this nineteenth-century creation takes its place as only one of many imitators of the KJV's theology of monarchical glory and its archaic rhetoric that circulated in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries of American culture. In a fascinating recent article, Eran Shalev has

tracked the publication of dozens of tracts and monographs from roughly 1740 to 1850, in which, as he puts it, "American authors and commentators used [the] ontologically privileged [language of the KJV] as a means to establish their claims for truth, as well as their authority and legitimacy in public discourse."[46] For example, Richard Snowden's 1793 *The American Revolution: Written in the Style of Ancient History,* begins:

> 1. In the thirteenth year of the reign of George the king, whose dominions extended from the island of Britain to the uttermost parts of the earth! 2. The same year the king made a decree to tax the people of the provinces in the land of Columbia, for they had paid no tribute to the king, neither they nor their forefathers. 3. Nevertheless they gave the king every year a free-will offering (not as tributaries) for they were free men, and were never in bondage to any: 4. Neither were the seditious to the interest of Cesar, they loved the king, and meddled not with those who were given to change: his enemies were their enemies, and they fought the battles of the king.[47]

Snowden goes on like this for two long volumes, describing the American Revolution in the cadences and tropes of the KJV. Shalev nicely draws the conclusion for us: "While the language of the [KJV] reiterated Americans' understanding of their collective mission, it also positioned politics as the new religion of the republic, a medium that sanctified the nation and constructed Americans' perception of chosenness."[48] In short, American history itself was "sacred time," where the sacrifices of the ancestors would live forever in glorious memory.

In the twentieth century, of course, this archaic rhetoric largely faded from public usage—or, perhaps more accurately—was transmuted into memorials and banal rituals that generated consent if not conformity without much question.[49] Almost any of the U.S. war memorials on the National Mall could serve as examples—I have studied the Vietnam Veterans Memorial most closely—but let's turn briefly instead to the role of the great twentieth-century hymn of the civil religion, "God Bless America." As is well known, the "Star-Spangled Banner" became the national anthem in 1931. It is a song rife with the imagery of light, and hence of glory. But "God Bless America," written by Irving Berlin in an early version in 1917 but released after some revisions in 1938, makes explicit what the national anthem only implies. The initial recording, by Kate Smith, included a prelude that sets the whole in context:

While the storm clouds gather far across the sea,
Let us swear allegiance to a land that's free,
Let us all be grateful for a land so fair,
As we raise our voices in a solemn prayer.
God bless America,
Land that I love.
Stand beside her, and guide her
Through the night with a light from above.
From the mountains, to the prairies,
To the oceans, white with foam
God bless America, My home sweet home
God bless America, My home sweet home.

Ethnomusicologist Katherine Meizel has analyzed how this song has served many functions as a sacred anthem or "canonic patriotic song" in "the definition of American civil religion, of Americanness itself." Most notably, after 9/11 it was sung by members of Congress on the steps of the Capitol, and it has now become a staple in the seventh inning of Sunday baseball games across America.[50] Meizel does not trace the song's central trope of "blessing" to the KJV, but for most Americans hearing the song, the biblical authority associated with that symbol is manifest, even if its source is unknown. Indeed, in a sign of just how authoritative the tropes of the KJV remain, even if little known, the invocation "God Bless America" has now become a near-mandatory staple at the conclusion of major presidential addresses—a practice begun by Richard M. Nixon, escalated by Ronald Reagan, and given a distinctive (but significant) gloss by President George W. Bush: "May God continue to bless the United States of America."[51]

Now, there is nothing wrong with praying for the nation; we do it every Sunday in our local congregations. But the desire that this prayer articulates, when enacted as if a mandatory practice by officials elected to serve the common good, suggests a hyperauthority associated with biblical symbols that in fact evacuates the texts of any substantial or living meaning. What we have here, in short, is the analogy in the civil religion to what has happened to the "literal" reading of Scripture in the wake of the early-twentieth-century fundamentalist movement in American Christianity. It is no longer the intention of the terms that matters—the living truth of the literal meaning of the text (in the original languages). What matters is the text as fetish; the text as incantation; the text as inerrant, inspired, and a sign of one's righteous, blessed status that one can use as a club against somebody else. The prayer that invokes "God bless

America" then becomes not a prayer addressed to a living God, but an escapist (if not callous or craven) attempt to appear pious in an effort to hold onto (or to claim) power—as it clearly was for the originator of this particular usage, Nixon. This is what Ernest Becker called "the vital lie" that grounds the denial of death. It is the kind of escapist fantasy and irresponsible eschatology that is found in the *Left Behind* series and much of Christian apocalypticism. It is the kind of superstitious cant found in solemn assemblies that wish for the material blessing of God but refuse to engage seriously in economics or social policy. And as the recent documentary *Flight from Death* has documented so effectively, when people are caught up in fetish worship to preserve their culturally generated vital lie, they will gladly die and kill, innocently even, on its behalf.[52]

Beyond Blood Sacrifice for the Nation

I hope I have established, however imperfectly, how fully a theology of monarchical glory associated with the tropes of the King James Bible has been present in American civil religion. This innocent domination has marked much of American history, and has been built around what Christian feminist theologian Sallie McFague has called the "monarchical model" of metaphorical theology, producing oscillating allegiance to domination or benevolence, force or escapism.[53] In the process, many have been "sacrificed" ostensibly to secure glory, and blessing, for the new sovereignty residing in the egalitarian king of kings of American democracy. This oscillation in the symbolic system of the American civil religion between innocence and dominance has led us to the current state of our commonwealth where we seem paralyzed by mutually exclusive and polar opposite policy platforms of benign government by a nation-state that we expect to shine like the sun, on the one hand, and antigovernment resentment that pits leaders (and government itself) as the whore of Babylon rivaling the true King of kings of every individual and her or his own god. Is there a way beyond this perpetual war that demands blood sacrifice for the nation?[54]

Ironically, like Mark Noll, I find hope in the flourishing of different Bible versions among us, and I can perhaps extend Noll's insight to find hope also in the growing familiarity of global citizens with other sacred texts that hold even more ancient lineages of authority than the KJV—the Vedas of Hinduism, the Sutras of Buddhism, and the Holy Qu'ran of Islam, to name only a few.[55] It has only been in the past century that we have had

access to these texts with anything approaching a critical yet sympathetic sensibility. Knowledge of these texts, as with knowledge of the deep meanings of the KJV—as opposed to its fetishized exploitation—might actually point us toward what I call, in the working title of my current book project, a coming religious peace. That is, as we study the original languages of the texts, and thereby restore a multilayered sense of their literal meanings, we might just discover how our symbols constitute for us an agency of peace building; how our symbols—even glory and blessing and perhaps even the hope for a King of kings who is also a Prince of Peace—might promote trust in the fragile but truly human (and thereby divine) creative use of language. In such an engagement with the dignity of difference as revealed in texts, we learn to give, and to receive, reasons for our claims. In doing so, we neither endeavor to justify our eternal innocence, nor to dominate an enemy, but only to participate together in the work of citizenship, or what we might call public theology. If that horizon continues to emerge—and it is a horizon that King James I, in his own parochial way, envisioned—then it will be possible for us to say, along with the apostle Paul, recalling the Word of God to him, and reexpressed in the words of the KJV translators: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (1 Cor 12:9).

Notes

1. See David G. Burke, ed., *Translation That Openeth the Window: Reflections on the History and Legacy of the King James Bible* (Society of Biblical Literature Biblical Scholarship in America 23; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009); Gordon Campbell, *Bible: The Story of the King James Version, 1611–2011* (London: Oxford University Press, 2010); Alister E. McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 2001); Adam Nicolson, *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003). I have found particularly valuable an older monograph by the great socialist historian Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-century Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1993); and a very recent essay by Stephen Prickett, "Language within Language: The King James Steamroller," in *The King James Bible after 400 Years: Literary, Linguistic, and Cultural Influences* (ed. Hannibal Hamlin and Norman W. Jones; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 27–44. I follow Hill in attending to the political significance of the text—though with a somewhat different application; and I follow Prickett, who concludes about the intentions of King James and his translators that "this was to be a deeply conservative text" (p. 30). See also, along these lines, R. S. Sugirtharajah, "Postcolonial Notes on the KJB," in Hamlin and Jones, *King James Bible,* 146–63, especially Sugirthrajah's claim that

many recent histories have a "hermeneutical blind spot regarding the role the KJB has played in modern colonialism" (152).

2. Jon Pahl, *Empire of Sacrifice: The Religious Origins of American Violence* (New York: New York University Press, 2010).

3. See Andrew Bacevich, *Washington Rules: America's Path to Permanent War* (New York: Metropolitan, 2010).

4. The literature on civil religion is vast. See Bellah's original essay, "Civil Religion in America," *Daedalus* 96 (1967): 1–21; Philip Hammond, James G. Mosely, Amanda Porterfield, and Jonathan Sarna, "Civil Religion Revisited," in *Religion and American Culture* 4 (Winter 1994): 1–23; and, most recently, Niels Reeh, "American Civil Religion as State-Mythology," in *Holy Nations and Global Identities: Civil Religion, Nationalism, and Globalisation* (ed. Annika Hvithamar, Margit Warburg, and Brian Arly Jacobsen; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 79–97.

5. My work has been influenced by, but does not slavishly follow, that of René Girard, especially *Violence and the Sacred* (trans. Patrick Gregory; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977). On sacrifice I found particularly helpful an article by Kathryn McClymond, "The Nature and Elements of Sacrificial Ritual," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 16 (2004): 337–66.

6. See Jeffrey Stout, *Blessed Are the Organized: Grassroots Democracy in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

7. Robert Jewett, *Mission and Menace: Four Centuries of American Religious Zeal* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008).

8. Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Vintage, 2009).

9. On tropes in historical studies, see Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975).

10. See here Nicolson, *God's Secretaries,* among others.

11. Anthony Grafton, *Worlds Made by Words: Scholarship and Community in the Modern West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

12. Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

13. See John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (ed. W. R. Owens; Oxford World's Classics; London: Oxford University Press, 2003), 261–64.

14. See Laura Knoppers, "Translating Majesty: The King James Bible, John Milton, and the English Revolution," in *ABC Religion and Ethics*, May 12, 2011. Online: http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2011/05/12/3215012.htm.

15. See, for instance, Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *The Power of the Word: Scripture and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007); and John Dominic Crossan and Jonathan L. Reed, *In Search of Paul: How Jesus's Apostle Opposed Rome's Empire with God's Kingdom* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2004).

16. See John Day, *Molech: A God of Human Sacrifice in the Old Testament* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 41; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

17. See "K-B-D," online at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K-B-D.

18. Sacvan Bercovitch, "The Biblical Basis of the American Myth," in *The Bible and American Arts and Letters* (ed. Giles Gunn; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 221–23.

19. See Jon Pahl, *Paradox Lost: Free Will and Political Liberty in American Culture, 1630–1760* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); idem, "Homicide and American Religion," in *Bereavement and Death Rituals* (vol. 3 of *Religion, Death, and Dying*; ed. Lucy Bregman; Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2010), 135–58; and idem, "Shifting Sacrifices: Christians, War, and Peace in America," in *American Christianities: A History of Dominance and Diversity* (ed. Catherine A. Brekus and W. Clark Gilpin; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 445–65.

20. John Norton, *The Heart of New England Rent at the Blasphemies of the Present Generation: Or a Brief Tractate Concerning the Doctrine of the Quakers* (Cambridge, Mass.: Samuel Green, 1659), 56.

21. Ibid.

22. See Lawrence Shaw Mayo, *John Endecott: A Biography* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), who reprints the letter in its entirety, 252–53.

23. See David Carrasco, *City of Sacrifice: The Aztec Empire and the Role of Violence in Civilization* (Boston: Beacon, 2000).

24. See Carla Pestana, *Quakers and Baptists in Colonial Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 34.

25. Norton, *Heart of New England*, 57.

26. In developing this fluid notion of "Enlightened" religion, I follow Catherine A. Brekus, "Sarah Osborn's Enlightenment: Reimagining Eighteenth-Century Intellectual History," in *The Religious History of American Women: Reimagining the Past* (ed. Catherine A. Brekus; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 108–41.

27. See "Betsy Ross Homepage." Online: http://www.ushistory.org/betsy/. Ross's religion—both historical and mythic—deserves a full-length study in its own right. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich has made a good start in "How Betsy Ross Became Famous: Oral Tradition, Nationalism, and the Invention of History," *Common-Place* 8 (October 2007). Online: http://www.common-place.org/vol-08/no-01/ulrich/.

28. The origins of the terms "Old Glory" for the U.S. flag are shrouded in some mystery and deserve investigation. According to legend, the terms originated with Tennesseean William Driver (1803–1886), who spontaneously called the flag "Old Glory" when he saw it unfurl on his ship in 1831. Driver's papers are in the Tennessee State Library and Archives in Nashville. Thanks to the Temple University librarian Fred Rowland for help in this research.

29. My discussion here follows Eran Shalev, "A Republic Amidst the Stars: Political Astronomy and the Intellectual Origins of the Stars and Stripes," *Journal of the Early Republic* 31 (Spring 2011): 39–73.

30. See Perry Miller, "The Location of American Religious Freedom," in *Nature's Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 159.

31. Harry S. Stout, *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War* (New York: Viking, 2006), xvii.

32. Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, xii–xiv.

33. The hymn first appeared in Atlantic Monthly in 1862. See "Battle Hymn of the Republic." Online: http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/b/h/bhymnotr.htm.

34. Surprisingly little historical attention has been paid to this hymn. See Edward D. Snyder, "The Biblical Background of the 'Battle Hymn of the Republic,'" *New England Quarterly* 24 (June 1951): 231–38; and Annie J. Randall, "A Censorship of Forgetting: Origins and Origin Myths of Battle Hymn of the Republic," in *Music, Power, and Politics* (ed. Annie J. Randall; New York: Routledge, 2005), 5–24. Randall perceptively notes the "irony" that a hymn based on a camp tune, "John Brown's Body," that remembered a "terrorist" and invoked "fundamentalist holy war" would be sung in all innocence after 9/11, conveniently "forgetting" the religious violence in American history to rally vengeance against terrorists.

35. See Michael Jacobs, "Co-Opting Christian Chorales: Songs of the Ku Klux Klan," *American Music* 28 (2010): 368–77. Thanks to Temple University librarian Fred Rowland for this tip.

36. Edward Tabor Linenthal, *Sacred Ground: Americans and Their Battlefields* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

37. See James Strachey, ed., *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (24 vols.; 1953–1974; repr., New York: Norton, 1976).

38. Yi Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

39. Jon Pahl, *Shopping Malls and Other Sacred Spaces: Putting God in Place* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2003).

40. See Robert Putnam and David Campbell, *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010).

41. Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death* (1974; repr., New York: Free Press, 1993).

42. See Robert Jay Lifton, *Revolutionary Immortality: Mao Tse Tung and the Chinese Cultural Revolution* (New York: Norton, 1976).

43. Among many, see Catherine Albanese, *Sons of the Fathers: The Civil Religion of the American Revolution* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976); Patricia Bonomi, *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America* (London: Oxford University Press, 1993); and Paul Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

44. See Philip L. Barlow, "Forum: American Scriptures," in *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 21 (2011): 8.

45. The Church of Jesus Christ—Latter Day Saints, "The Book of Mormon: Word of God." Online: http://mormon.org/book-of-mormon?gclid=CPedsLnf6qsCFUld5QodLz1TLw.

46. Eran Shalev, "Written in the Style of Antiquity: Pseudo-Biblicism and the Early American Republic, 1770–1830," *Church History* 79 (2010): 800–826.

47. Richard Snowden, *The American Revolution: Written in the Style of Ancient History: In Two Volumes* (Philadelphia: Jones, Hoff & Derrick, 1793), 1:1–2.

48. Shalev, "Written in the Style," 802.

49. A notable exception to this tendency is the "King James Only movement," profiled in Ron Grossman, "For Some Christians, King James is the Only Bible," in *Chicago Tribune*, March 12, 2011. Online: http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2011-

03-12/news/ct-met-king-james-20110311_1_king-james-bible-translation-bible-study-class.

50. Katherine Meizel, "A Singing Citizenry: Popular Music and Civil Religion in America," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 45 (2006): 497–503.

51. See David Domke and Kevin Coe, "Happy 35th, 'God Bless America,'" *TimeU.S.*, Tuesday April 29, 2008. Online: http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1735972,00.html.

52. Patrick Shen and Greg Bennick, *Flight from Death: The Quest for Immortality* (Pasadena, Calif.: Transcendental Media, 2009). Online: http://wp.flightfromdeath.com.

53. Sallie McFague, *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987).

54. Carolyn Marvin and David Ingle, *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation: Totem Rituals and the American Flag* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

55. Mark Noll, "A World Without the King James Version," in *Christianity Today,* May 2011. Online: http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2011/may/worldwithoutkjv.html. See also idem, "William Jennings Bryan, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson and the King James Version of the Bible," *Theology* 114 (2011): 251–59; and idem, "Forum: American Scriptures," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 21 (2011): 24–31.

The KJV in Orthodox Perspective

Simon Crisp

A possible framework for this study is provided by the following question: What kind of influence of the King James Bible could we expect in the Orthodox world? Given that the majority of Orthodox Christians are familiar with the Scriptures in Greek or Slavonic, we might imagine that any influence would be either slight or nonexistent.

One possible starting point for our investigations could be the boom in Bible translation in the early nineteenth century, which was driven by the major English-speaking Bible societies in the colonial context of missionary expansion and included translation projects in many countries with majority Orthodox populations.

In the case of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS), for example, we can see an interesting mixture of centralization on the one hand and devolution on the other. In the early decades of BFBS translation activity in Orthodox countries as elsewhere, in order to secure approval for publication every translation had to pass across the desk of the BFBS Editorial Superintendent in London. However, at the same time (not surprisingly, given the volume of work) the decision to publish was largely based on reviews of the text provided by or commissioned from respected members of the local community.

Even in the early translation policy statements of the BFBS we do not find unequivocal demands to rely on the KJV as the basis for translation. The following statement from the *Suggestions for Translators, Editors and Revisers of the Bible* (1877) is characteristically balanced:

> It ought to be mentioned in so many words … that the BFBS has never considered the English version a fixed standard in all matters of translation. It is only regarded as a generally safe type of what a version ought to

> be in style, idiom and learning. Its renderings are not infallible, but they ought not lightly to be set aside.[1]

Later, the *Rules for the Guidance of Translators, Revisers and Editors Working in Connection with the British and Foreign Bible Society* (1917) are more forthright about use of the KJV and its successor the RV, but only in cases where translators cannot work directly from the original languages: "Translators who are unacquainted with the originals are desired to follow the text or margin of the English Authorized or Revised Version, or, in the case of translators unacquainted with English, some other version sanctioned by the Committee."[2]

Since in the overwhelming majority of cases Bible translators in Orthodox countries undoubtedly were to a greater or lesser extent "acquainted with the originals," it would seem that such a line of inquiry is unlikely to turn up much in the way of direct influence of the KJV.

A more promising area of research may be English-speaking Orthodoxy, since the part of the Orthodox *oikoumenē* where the KJV has had most influence—unsurprisingly—is the English-speaking Orthodox world.

Looking first at the question of Bible text for church reading and private devotion, it is hardly surprising that the KJV has fulfilled the role of the Holy Scripture for English-speaking Orthodoxy. However, this is by default (or by tradition) rather than by design: before the twentieth century there was essentially no alternative. As Michael Prokurat justly observes, "the irony of Orthodox nostalgia for the KJV is that that translation never had any blessing or authority bestowed upon it by any part of the Eastern Church, nor was it ever checked theologically for accuracy against Eastern usages(s)."[3] From the point of view of base text, of course, the New Testament in the KJV is naturally more acceptable for Orthodox usage because the Textus Receptus upon which it is based is not so dissimilar from the traditional text of the Byzantine church (at least, it is much more similar than are the modern critical texts of the NT)—but this is hardly the case with the Old Testament, since the KJV is translated from the Hebrew text rather than the Septuagint, which is canonical for almost all Orthodox.

This may also be the reason why none of the modern ecumenical or interconfessional Bible translations in English has been officially accepted by the Orthodox Church. In the case of the NRSV, for example, there was some Orthodox involvement in the translation process, but this was at the level of individual scholars rather than church bodies. The resulting text

was not accepted for church use by any English-speaking Orthodox jurisdiction, mainly because the church authorities were uncomfortable with the use of inclusive language.[4]

If there is any reason—beyond default or tradition—for Orthodox use of the KJV, it is surely to be found in a nostalgic (to use Prokurat's term) or instinctive feeling that the language of this translation is somehow particularly appropriate for conveying the message of the Bible. And this in turn is due to the pervasive influence of the conservative language of liturgy.

It has been said that the vast liturgical corpus of Orthodoxy may best be characterized as an extended meditation on Scripture, and so the acquaintance of Orthodox Christians with the text of the Bible is primarily in the context of the services of the church. It has been calculated, for example, that the Divine Liturgy contains 98 references to the Old Testament and 124 references to the New Testament.[5]

Before the twentieth century, of course, the question of which English text of the Bible should be used in the Divine Liturgy and other services hardly arose. Unless an original translation of the biblical passages was to be made, there was scarcely any viable alternative to the KJV. In any case Orthodox liturgical texts in English were little more than curiosities at this time: since there was hardly a community using them, their purpose was essentially to introduce an exotic form of worship to the English-speaking Christian world.

All of this changed, however, with the work of a doughty Episcopalian woman from New England called Isabel Florence Hapgood.[6] She was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on November 21, 1851, to a relatively well-to-do manufacturing family. Her father was responsible for several inventions, most notably a railway sleeping car that was a precursor of the Pullman. Isabel displayed an early gift for languages, and over the course of her life translated into English a number of literary works from several languages—most notably perhaps several works by Count Leo Tolstoy, with whom she maintained a personal correspondence over many years, and whom she visited in person during a two-year stay in Russia in the 1880s.

Hapgood's most abiding monument is the *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic Church*, which she compiled and translated over a period of some eleven years (from 1895 to 1906). The volume was first published in 1906, and went through six editions over the course of the twentieth century. Until the rise of more recent English liturgical translations, "Hapgood's Service Book," as it became known, was a key text

used in English-speaking Orthodox parishes on both sides of the Atlantic, and also a significant contribution to Anglican-Orthodox dialogue.

Despite its rather idiosyncratic structure, Hapgood's volume was for a long time the only available English text for some of the less common services, and it may be said to have become a part of the historical consciousness of English-speaking Orthodoxy. According to the foreword to the latest edition (1983), by Metropolitan Philip (Saliba) of the Anthiochian archdiocese, "a continuous demand for the book exists and bears witness to its unsurpassed usefulness."[7]

Hapgood intended her Service Book to contribute to mutual understanding between her own Episcopal Church and the Church of Russia in particular; to this end the language of her translation is a kind of pastiche of the King James Bible and the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, and as such can read strangely today. The following examples are taken from her text of the service of Great Vespers:

- **Exalt the horn** of Orthodox Christians
- That our good God … will be graciously favourable and **easy to be entreated**
- Multiply them [these loaves] **in this holy habitation**

The translation of the rubrics can sound even more quaint:

> *And here shall be sung immediately,* Lord, I have cried unto thee … *And in the mean time the Deacon censeth the Sanctuary and all the Temple.*

Of course, the process of translating Orthodox liturgical texts into English advanced considerably during the twentieth century. Most of the English-speaking Orthodox jurisdictions have produced translations of a greater or lesser number of liturgical texts, and in recent years the democratization brought about by the Internet has led to the availability of several individual efforts as well.[8]

A special place in this pantheon is occupied by two substantial volumes prepared principally by Archimandrite (now Metropolitan) Kallistos (Timothy) Ware—the author incidentally of what is probably the best-known introductory volume on Orthodoxy for English-speaking readers, *The Orthodox Church*.[9] Entitled *The Festal Menaion* and *The Lenten Triodion*, they contain English texts of the major services for Great Lent and for the fixed feasts. What interests us most in this context however is the

introductory material in these volumes, in particular the extensive preface to the *Festal Menaion* that deals precisely with two key issues of direct relevance to our topic:

> So far as the general style of our translation is concerned, after much experimenting we decided to take as our model the language of the Authorized Version (the King James Bible). This, we realize, is a controversial decision. Many of our readers will probably feel that, if the liturgical texts are to come alive for people today, they must be rendered in a more contemporary idiom. To this it must be answered that the Greek used in the canons and hymns that are here translated was *never* a "contemporary" or "spoken" language. The Byzantine hymnographers wrote in a liturgical style that was consciously "artificial," even though it was never intentionally obscure or unintelligible. As we see it, the language of the Authorized Version is best adapted to convey the spirit of the original liturgical Greek.[10]

The first matter raised here concerns the general appropriateness of archaic versus modern language in liturgical translation. Of course this is hardly specific to Orthodoxy, but Metropolitan Kallistos applies the argument precisely to the situation of English-speaking Orthodoxy and the King James Bible, arguing that since the Greek of the liturgical texts was deliberately archaic (or more exactly, *archaizing*), it is entirely appropriate to use an archaic form of the language for the English translation of these texts.

An even more specific and significant issue concerns the relationship of English-speaking Orthodoxy to the English (essentially to the Anglican) liturgical tradition. This is how Metropolitan Kallistos characterizes the situation in the preface already referred to:

> For three centuries and more the Authorized Version, and along with it the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, have provided the words with which English-speaking peoples throughout the world have addressed God. So long as certain archaisms of language and construction are avoided, the English of the King James Bible is still easily understood.[11]

For other authors the issue is by no means so clear-cut (and indeed they reach the opposite conclusion from Metropolitan Kallistos). In a valuable survey article on Orthodox liturgical translation Paul Garrett writes: "We cannot—or rather, should not—consider ourselves bound to the (essen-

tially Anglican) tradition of the King James Version (and the accompanying Book of Common Prayer)."[12] The reason for this is that English-speaking Orthodox, as those coming late to the fold from outside the Orthodox heartlands, can be less tied to a kind of nostalgia for archaic formulations. The same point is well put by Nigel Gotteri:

> Our advantage as Orthodox is that we are not so much revising our English as translating into modern English a variety of Christian experience which has evolved quite without reference to English conceptual frameworks. As a result we should be able to avoid outworn clichés more easily than most; we may use well-established words if we are sure that they have retained their full content, but we are not tied to them by our own traditions or by feelings of nostalgia.[13]

Garrett's argument is in fact a more sophisticated one than would at first appear from the plain statement that Orthodox do not need to follow an Anglican tradition. In short he is arguing for a distinction between two levels of language—simpler and more direct for biblical texts and more complex for liturgical ones:

> The text we adopt must be of sufficiently simple style for us to be able to develop its themes hymnographically. The text of Scripture ought not to "compete" with the liturgical materials, as would be the case if an extremely "literary" Bible is chosen. Rather it should form a clear, solid foundation for the hymnographer's art. Furthermore, a very literary base text will not only make the translator's work more complex than necessary … but will, in addition, distort the proper relationship of Scripture to liturgy which can be seen in the original *koine* (or "common") Greek of the Scriptures and the luxuriant Byzantine Greek of the liturgy.[14]

The distinction made here between the language of Scripture and the language of liturgy is really an argument for the kind of *functional equivalence* first proposed by Eugene Nida:[15] just as there are two types or levels of Greek used in the services (a simple one for the text of Scripture and a more elaborate one for the hymns), so an attempt should be made to maintain the same distinction in English translation.

A more explicit application of translation theory to liturgical translation is made by Adriana Şerban. She begins, we may say, where Metropolitan Kallistos left off. Noting the archaizing tendency apparent in several English translations of the Orthodox liturgy, she observes:

> It is then particularly interesting to note how, in the absence of an Orthodox tradition in Britain that new translations could take as a reference point, a number of 20th century translations … preferred to look back to the language of Catholic and Protestant models, rather than to start afresh, using contemporary English. In a sense, then, the process of translating the Orthodox liturgy into English is one of colonizing the past.[16]

What Şerban does, essentially, is to apply the functionalist or target-oriented translation approach to English versions of the Orthodox liturgy. This focus on appropriateness for the intended audience of the different translations allows her to make some interesting observations. In particular, she draws attention to a dual tendency in translations of the liturgy made in the United Kingdom. On the one hand, because of the growth in numbers of English converts to Orthodoxy and the fact that second- and third-generation immigrants from Orthodox countries are more comfortable using English than the language of their country of origin, she finds a modernizing tendency in translations intended for lay or parish use. On the other hand, in a translation intended primarily for monastic use, she finds a conscious and systematic attempt to use archaic forms of language based on the KJV and the Book of Common Prayer, which the translators characterize—in an echo of Metropolitan Kallistos's words quoted earlier—as "liturgical English at is noblest."

This may be illustrated by looking at a short extract from the Liturgy (the Prayer of the Second Antiphon) in three different English translations:

- Lord our God, save thy people and bless thine inheritance; preserve the fullness of thy Church, sanctify those who love the beauty of thy house, glorify them by thy divine power and forsake us not who hope in thee. (*Liturgy of the Orthodox Church,* 1979)
- Lord our God, save your people and bless your inheritance; protect the fullness of your Church, sanctify those who love the beauty of your house, glorify them in return by your divine power, and do not forsake us who hope in you. (*Divine Liturgy,* 1995)
- O Lord our God, save thy people, and bless thine inheritance. Preserve the fullness of thy Church. Sanctify them that love **the habitation of thy house**. Do thou by thy divine power **exalt them unto glory**; and forsake us not who put our trust in thee. (*Orthodox Liturgy,* 1982)

Looking at the first two translations, we can see that—in pronominal usage and word order—the language has been lightly updated between 1979 and

1995 to conform more closely to contemporary usage. This surely reflects a judgment about the way in which the needs of the target audience (essentially parishes where the liturgical language is English) changed over the fifteen years between the two translations.

The third translation, however, although it is more recent than the first, adopts a much more consciously archaizing approach, evidently because of its intended use in monastic services; and, in addition to archaic pronouns and word order, it clearly seeks to use specific phrases from the KJV/Book of Common Prayer tradition (as indicated by the boldface items).

Let us now attempt to draw some conclusions from the material we have considered. First, it is undoubtedly true that the KJV has played a central role in the engagement of English-speaking Orthodox Christians with the text of Scripture. This is partly due to innate conservatism, partly (in the case of the NT) because of issues of base text, but mainly it reflects a feeling that the archaic language of the KJV is somehow more in accord with ancient tradition.

Second, the issue of the appropriateness of KJV language for English liturgical translation has been a matter of some debate—essentially between those who feel that Orthodox liturgical usage in English should be linked to the Anglican tradition of the KJV (and the Book of Common Prayer), and those who feel that the different origin of Eastern Christian traditions allows more freedom when texts from this tradition are translated into English.

Third, the changing demography of English-speaking Orthodoxy may lead to tensions between different constituencies (second- and third-generation immigrants from the Orthodox heartlands on the one hand, English-speaking converts on the other), and this may result in a proliferation of Orthodox liturgical translations in English, for different intended audiences.

In any event, I believe this short investigation has demonstrated that the ripples emanating from the King James Bible, although perhaps slight by the time they reached the shallows, have spread out to the edge of a very wide pond!

Notes

1. R. R. Girdlestone, *Suggestions for Translators, Editors and Revisers of the Bible* (London: Hatchard, 1877), 10.

2. British and Foreign Bible Society, *Rules for the Guidance of Translators, Revisers*

and Editors Working in Connection with the British and Foreign Bible Society (London: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1917), 8.

3. Michael Prokurat, "NRSV: Preliminary Report," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 43 (1999): 321 n. 13.

4. See ibid. for details. We may also mention here three recent efforts to produce an Orthodox Bible translation in English. The *Orthodox Study Bible* (2008) uses the NKJV text for its NT, while for the OT it has produced a new (and rather idiosyncratic) text by adaptation from Brenton's English translation of the Septuagint. The *Eastern/Greek Orthodox Bible* (NT 2009, OT in progress) is a fresh translation of the Patriarchal text of the NT and of the Septuagint; but once again it is the work of a group of individuals, and there are no signs yet of it being officially adopted. The same applies even more to the *Orthodox New Testament* (1st ed. 1999; 3rd ed. 2003; 2 vols.; Bueno Vista, Colo.: Holy Apostles Convent), a very literal rendering of the Greek text published with the blessing of two Orthodox jurisdictions outside the ecclesiastical mainstream.

5. Figures from D. Ciobatea cited in Adriana Şerban, "Archaising Versus Modernising in English Translations of the Orthodox Liturgy: St. John Crysostomos in the 20th Century," in *Translation and Religion: Holy Untranslatable?* (ed. Lynne Long; Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2005), 79.

6. For a short biography of Hapgood see Stuart H. Hoke, "A Generally Obscure Calling: A Character Sketch of Isabel Florence Hapgood," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 45 (2001): 55–93.

7. Isabel Florence Hapgood, *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic Church* (6th ed.; Englewood, N.J.: Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, 1983).

8. A good source for a wide range of English translations of liturgical texts is the website of St Jonah's Orthodox Church in Texas (http://www.saintjonah.org/services/resources.htm). A comprehensive set of English translations can be found on the homepage of Fr. Ephrem Lash, http://www.anastasis.org.uk/.

9. Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (rev. ed.; London: Penguin, 1993).

10. Mother Mary and Archimandrite Kallistos Ware, *The Festal Menaion* (London: Faber & Faber, 1969), 13–14.

11. Ibid., 14.

12. Paul D. Garrett, "The Problem of Liturgical Translation," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 22 (1978): 106.

13. Nigel Gotteri, "The Language of Orthodoxy," *Sobornost* 7/4 (1977): 255.

14. Garrett, "Problem of Liturgical Translation," 106–7.

15. Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 1969).

16. Şerban, "Archaising Versus Modernising," 77–78.

African Americans and the King James Version of the Bible

Rodney Sadler Jr.

Introduction

The King James Version of the Bible has been a prominent factor influencing the course of Western history for the past four hundred years. You need look no further than the African American community to find evidence for this claim. As a people, African Americans were not easy converts to Christianity. In fact, it took more than a century, two Great Awakenings, and the typically more egalitarian evangelistic tactics of the Baptists and Methodists for Christianity to begin to make significant inroads into African American communities. But more than these sociological factors, it took the stories from the pages of the Bible to open up the hearts and souls of enslaved Africans to the Christian faith.

In my article "Re-reading *Their* Scriptures: An Analysis of the Authority of Scripture among Early African Americans," I argue that within the pages of the Bible were the stories of God's interaction with key biblical figures, where the Lord God provides liberation, redemption, and deliverance. These stories serve as the mythopoeic, or "myth-making," basis for African American visions of freedom and self-determination and thus gave Christianity a certain appeal to enslaved Africans. As Albert Raboteau notes in his now-classic text *Slave Religion:*

> Slaves prayed for the future day of deliverance to come, and they kept hope alive by incorporating as part of *their* mythic past the Old Testament exodus of Israel out of slavery. The appropriation of the Exodus story was for the slaves a way of articulating their sense of historical identity as a people. That identity was also based, of course, upon their common heritage of enslavement. The Christian slaves applied the

> Exodus story, whose end they knew, to their own experience of slavery, which had not ended. In identifying with the Exodus story, they created meaning out of the chaotic and senseless experience of slavery. Exodus functioned as an archetypal event for the slaves.[1]

Scripture and the stories of a God who rescued the oppressed and redeemed the abused served as the African Americans' entrée into the Christian faith. As John Saillant reflects,

> In the second half of the eighteenth century, therefore, African American hermeneutics was born. …The Bible provided a context in which the sufferings of slaves could be understood and the misdeeds of the slavers judged, even if blacks could not at the moment free themselves. …The Bible provided an anti-slavery interpretation of history.[2]

Thus began the romance between blacks and the Bible. And when they were converted by this book, it was the great eloquence and the archaic voice of the KJV that evoked divinity in the text by its poetry and its royal grandeur. These stories are told in "God's language" and because of that, the KJV quickly captured African Americans' hearts and minds. This phenomenon did not end in the nineteenth century either. Even today, Howard University professor Alice Ogden Bellis notes:

> The translation of choice for African Americans is usually the King James Version. Blacks revere the KJV for the same reason many Roman Catholics still are fond of the Latin/Vulgate Bible: the poetry and antiquitous tone associated with a spirituality of earlier times, even another world. That some of the text is "mysterious," i.e., not fully understood, is what makes it special, instantly beckoning one to prayer and active dialogue with God. Modern translations, in making the text idiomatic in a contemporary way, cause the Bible to become suspect as a dubious translation of modernisms.[3]

The King James Version is to African American preaching, oration, and literature what Alexander Pushkin was to Russian literature. Without the elegant and rich poetry and prose of this text, born during the lifetime of William Shakespeare, England's greatest literary genius, the black bards would not have had the platform from which to soar to the remarkable heights that they reached with such memorable offerings as Frederick Douglass's "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July" or Maria Stewart's

"Farewell Address to Her Friends in the City of Boston," or Martin Luther King's "A Letter from a Birmingham Jail," or even James Weldon Johnson's "The Creation."

A fair treatment of this subject is likely not possible in the constraints of this paper. To paraphrase the Fourth Evangelist, "if [it] should be written … I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" on this subject. That said, in this paper I will first briefly explore the role of the KJV in early black literacy. Then I will divide the historical African American appropriation of the KJV into two basic types, "functional quotations" and "literalist interpretations," and talk about the implications of both of these hermeneutical moves for the African American community. Finally, I will explore some contemporary ideas about biblical translations to note the continued impact of this English version of the biblical Testaments on black Americans.

KJV as the Basis of Literacy

As Stephen B. Reid notes in *Experience and Tradition*:

> It was from the Bible that many black slaves learned to read and it was to the Bible that so many of them went to find guidance, comfort, a word of hope, and the promise of their deliverance from sin and slavery. The Bible has been the source of inspiration for poetry and song, as well as the inspiration for drama and sermon.[4]

These few words from Reid ably sum up the significance of the Bible for early African Americans. Though thought by most in contemporary society to be a religious book and a source of spiritual wisdom, for the first African Americans who encountered Scripture when enslaved, the Bible was far more important than that. It was a God book, a "talking book," a book that controlled life and death. Because of this, the Bible inspired African Americans to learn to read and write. Harriett Jacobs illustrates this as she recounts her experiences tutoring an older enslaved man:

> As soon as he could spell in two syllables he wanted to spell out words in the Bible. The happy smile that illuminated his face put joy into my heart. After spelling out a few words, he paused, and said, "Honey, it 'pears when I can read dis good book I shall be nearer to God. White man is got all de sense. He can larn easy. It ain't easy for ole black man like me.

> I only wants to read dis book, dat I may know how to live, den I hab no fear 'bout dying."[5]

Jacobs's account demonstrates a common theme in the narratives of formerly enslaved African Americans: the Bible inspired them to want to learn to read. This same sentiment is also expressed by Frederick Douglass as he recounted his initial quest for literacy in the 1891 biography authored by Frederic Holland, *Colored Orator:*

> I remember the first time I ever heard the Bible read, and from that time I trace my first desire to learn to read. I was over seven years old; my master had gone out one Sunday night, the children had gone to bed. I had crawled under the center table and had fallen asleep, when my mistress commenced to read the Bible aloud, so loud that she waked me. She waked me to sleep no more. I have found since that the chapter she then read was the first of Job. I remember my sympathy for the good old man, and my anxiety to learn more about him led me to ask my mistress to teach me to read.[6]

As Douglass recalls this pivotal event in his life we see the importance of the Bible to enslaved African Americans. It was Scripture that captured the imagination of enslaved blacks who had been legally prohibited from learning to read or write because their enslavers feared what would happen if they developed their full intellectual capacity. As Douglass's enslaver noted in response to his stated desire to read: "if this one should ever be taught to read the Bible, there would be no keeping him a slave."[7] But, as Douglass's legend states, having heard his enslaver prohibiting him from learning to read, "at once he made up his mind to get all he could."[8]

So began the rise of one of the most important intellectuals and social activists in the history of the United States. Through cunning he learned to read, often manipulating the free white youngsters in the neighborhood to share their school lessons with him. But it was always the Bible that was his primary pedagogue. It was said that in part he learned to read by picking up stray pages of the Bible from the gutter, cleaning and drying them, and then stealing away to study them in secret.[9] His scriptural studies would often occupy him until long in the night.[10]

Because of the time when Douglass lived (1818–1895) we should not be surprised that he was a student of the King James Bible. While we might suspect this because of the eloquent prose that he employs in his writing and oration, we can also recognize this from the quotations

of Scripture that he uses in his own writings. We will address his use of Scripture more in the next section, but it is important here to note that the KJV was likely the first piece of literature that early African American literati encountered, desired to learn, and eventually mastered. This alone makes it a significant artifact for African American history and should pique our curiosity about the influence this version had on the intellectual development of Black Americans.

Functional Quotations: Use of the Bible in Freedom Narratives and in the Civil Rights Movement

One of the interesting trends with African American appropriations of the KJV in liberationist-oriented literature and sermons is the use of this translation as the basis of "functional quotations." By "functional quotation" I mean that they employed the KJV as their base text and then playfully modified the text typologically, often replacing the biblical heroes with the African American community or villains with their enslavers or oppressors, or in some other purposeful way to produce a desired rhetorical end. Though the gist of the text was preserved, as were the poetic and archaic dimensions of its language, the exact words and word orders were less important and were often modified slightly to fit the authors' own narrative contexts.

In the appendix to Douglass's first autobiography, published in 1845, he offers an extensive citation from the KJV of Matt 23:

> The Christianity of America is a Christianity, of whose votaries it may be as truly said, as it was of the ancient scribes and Pharisees, "They bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. All their works they do for to be seen of men.—They love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, … and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.—But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.—Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith; these ought

> ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides! which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter; but within, they are full of extortion and excess.—Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."[11]

In this instance he reproduces the passages that deal with the woes against the scribes and Pharisees and uses these to critique the "religion of the South," the strange Southern perversion of the Christian faith that not only existed amid the dehumanizing conditions of the Southern slavocracy, but that was ultimately just "a mere covering for the most horrid crimes."[12]

As he reproduces the text, it is clear that he begins with the KJV, but that he deliberately alters it at points relevant to his rhetorical aims to deal more precisely with his focal concerns. What Douglass's quotation of Matt 23 demonstrates is that early African Americans made use of the KJV, but that they appropriated the text in a manner that best suited their arguments for freedom and social transformation. Hence, instead of an actual quotation, they preserve a "functional quotation."

We see this strategy at work in the writings of another formerly enslaved man, William Anderson. Anderson also appears to use the KJV as the base text for his "functional quotations." Consider the Ps 23–based quotation wherein Anderson generally follows the KJV (see table below), but modifies some terms, verb tenses, word orders, and even adds additional material from other psalms almost as though he was reciting them himself, typologically assuming the identity of the psalmist.[13]

Anderson's Text	**KJV Psalm 23 with additions**
The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want; He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters.	1 <A Psalm of David.> The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.
Yes, He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, for His own name's sake. Yea, though I walk	3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Yea, though I

through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.	walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Yes, thou anointeth my head with oil; thou spreadeth a table before me, in the presence of mine enemies.	5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.	6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.
I once was young, but now I am old, and I never have seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread.	Ps 37:25 I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.
The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.	Ps 24:1 <A Psalm of David.> The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof.

Anderson's "functional quotation" was used almost as a triumphant crescendo in his narrative to affirm his faith in God despite the many "dangers toils and snares" that he has endured at the hands of those who sought to imprison or reenslave him. If we look carefully at his appropriation of this passage, we will note subtle purposeful changes:

- the addition of the word "yes" to verses 3 and 5 to confirm that God has acted in his own life
- the addition of the word "own" in verse 3 to express the intimate relationship he has with God
- the substitution of the term "shall" for "will" in verse 4 to demonstrate that he is kept from fearing evil
- the substitution of the past tense "have followed me" for "shall follow me" in verse 6 to demonstrate the faithfulness of the Lord throughout the various crises in his life

This "functional quotation" of the KJV personalizes the passage and serves as a powerful theological summation of his life experiences and a potent

rhetorical tool to convince his readers both of the hardships of what he endured and the fidelity of God. Subsequent to this quotation of Scripture, he begins to riff on many biblical and religious themes to describe his jubilation that the Lord had rescued him from his countless perils.[14]

Use of "Functional Quotations" in Martin Luther King's Speeches and Sermons

The KJV was the principal form of the Bible used by many African Americans during the Civil Rights Movement. For example, when Martin Luther King Jr. preached the sermons and delivered the speeches that would frame this movement in terms of the Christian faith, it was to the pages of the KJV that he turned to ground his words. For example, as he begins his sermon "The Drum Major Instinct," delivered on February 4, 1968, he takes his text from Mark 10:35–45. In it he refers extensively to this version, exploiting its poetic presentation to his own ends as he moves toward his focal verse: "But so shall it not be among you, but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your *servant*; and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all."[15] As in other instances in African American oratory, we should not be surprised that he does not quote the text precisely, but employs a "functional quotation." In order to emphasize his point, he changes the stated text's language. Instead of the KJV's "whosoever will be great among you, shall be your *minister*," he utilizes the parallel term from verse 44b, *servant*. The rest of the pericope remains static; his change clarifies the meaning of the archaic use of the term *minister* with a term that will resonate with his audience.

This minor alteration to the KJV demonstrates both a reverence for the text and a willingness to alter it to fit a rhetorical need. The minor change becomes significant in the latter part of the sermon when King gets to the refrain:

> But recognize that he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. That's your new definition of greatness. And this morning, the thing that I like about it … by giving that definition of greatness, it means that everybody can be great. Because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know about Plato and Aristotle to serve. You don't have to know Einstein's theory of relativity to serve. You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics

> in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love. And you can be that servant.[16]

King's "functional quotation" employs the text of KJV in such a way that both exploits its historic importance to African American Christians as the Word of God and recast it in a manner that serves his distinctive purposes. Similarly, in King's "Remaining Awake through a Great Revolution" sermon, delivered March 31, 1968 (his last Sunday service), King appeals to the KJV of Matt 25. Employing another functional quotation, he changes the order and content of the chapter, and instead offers his own interpretation.

> But I was hungry and ye fed me not. I was naked and ye clothed me not. I was devoid of a decent sanitary house to live in, and ye provided no shelter for me. And consequently, you cannot enter the kingdom of greatness. If ye do it unto the least of these, my bretheren, ye do it to me.[17]

Here we see a playful liberal appropriation of the KJV's rendering of Matt 25 with deliberate alterations. First, he keeps in place the archaic language, using "ye" for "you" and "brethren" for "brothers" as would be more plausible in his reappropriation. Second, he changes the word order and content, and with it he has modernized the concerns of this chapter (i.e., "I was devoid of a decent sanitary house to live in"). In this way, the concerns of his audience have been sacralized; they have been elevated to a biblical level, having a place among the concerns of Jesus himself as attested by the fact that they are presented in the distinctive archaic language of the KJV.

Likewise King appropriates and modifies the KJV's translation of Luke 4:18 in his April 3, 1968, sermon, "I See the Promised Land." King in the midst of his sermon declares, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to deal with the problems of the poor."[18] The use of Old English "hath" mixed with King's contemporary concern for the poor transforms his words, which clearly resonate with the Lukan Jesus' fulfillment statement in chapter 4, into sacred script. Again, by this "functional quotation," he is able to combine the sacralizing style of the antiquarian KJV with his own message of concern for the contemporary poor and thereby elevate the plight of the American poor, making it Christ's own concern.

Thus African Americans' appropriation of the KJV in "functional quotations" enable them to utilize the familiar sanctity of a beloved translation

of the Word of God to recast their own messages in ways that are rhetorically potent and theologically compelling.

Literalist Interpretations: Instances Where KJV Becomes the Base Text for Particular Movements

The King James Bible has also proven useful for certain Africana movements that, based upon particular translational choices made in this version, were able to frame their theologies. These groups developed particularized interpretations of Scripture that make them distinctive and that distinguish them from typical mainstream Africana Christian interpretive traditions.

Members of one African American movement that has based fundamental details of its interpretive tradition on the KJV is a group called the Ethiopianists. This group, growing from the seeds of mid-nineteenth-century ideas of David Walker and Henry Highland Garnet, flowers in the latter part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries in the work of religious leaders like missionary intellectuals Alexander Crummel and Edward Blyden, and institutional leaders Bishop Henry M. Turner and Marcus Garvey. The thrust of their movement is based upon the understanding of one passage in the Psalter:

> *ye'ĕtāyû hašmannîm minnî miṣrāyim kûš tārîṣ yādāyw lē'lōhîm.* (Ps 68:32 MT)
> Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God. (68:31 KJV)

This text has posed considerable problems to English translators over the years, and they have understood it to mean very different things. For example:

> Envoys will come from Egypt; Cush will submit herself to God. (NIV)
> Let bronze be brought from Egypt; let Ethiopia hasten to stretch out its hands to God. (NRSV)

My attempts to make sense of this verse, which George Knight has deemed the "most notorious in the whole Bible,"[19] led me to make difficult and somewhat unsatisfactory text-critical choices to arrive at a translation that resembles the NIV in verse 31a, "Envoys will come from Egypt," and the NRSV in verse 31b, "Let Cush hasten to stretch out its hands to God."

In essence, the passage seems to suggest a future moment when people of the great southern empires of Egypt and Cush will hasten to Jerusalem to worship YHWH. This verse is thus an attempt to elevate the Judeans' self-estimation by predicting a moment when mighty nations to which Judah has served as a vassal will prostrate themselves before Judah's God.[20]

From this obscure text, which is extraordinarily difficult to comprehend, grew an elaborate ideological movement that sought to make sense of African Americans' plight in the aftermath of the abolishment of systemic chattel slavery. It was a complex and internally conflicted ideology. It both celebrated the *sovereignty* of God, as the one who allowed the enslavement of Africans in order for them to become "civilized" and christianized by the Europeans who oppressed them, and the *providence* of God, who would soon deliver Africans and give them an opportunity to exercise their superior genius in the reorder of the world. At the same time it both provided a theological legitimization for the horrors of slavery and decried slavery as a crime against a once—and soon to be again—great people. The text as presented in the distinctive rendering of the KJV served as a prophecy of God's impending activity in the very near future; it was an eschatological foretelling of a return to prominence and purpose of a debased and humiliated people.

Based on the KJV's translation of this single verse, members of this movement were able to find biblically based theological support for their particular nationalist ideology. Ethiopianists took the text and ran with it, using the notion of "princes" to reflect the former greatness of their ancestors and "Ethiopia" to refer to the entire continent of Africa poised on the brink of a revival.[21] Thus a historically significant faction that continues to impact contemporary life in Africana communities was born of a dubious translation of a difficult verse.

Another such group predicating its ideology on a distinctive interpretation of the KJV is the Rastafarians. The Rastafarians are an Afro-Hebraic religious group increasingly popular in the United States but with its origins in Jamaica. I mention them in this paper both because of their influence on contemporary African American communities due to the growing popularity of Reggae music and roots culture, and because they are also a derivative group of the Ethiopianist movement.

Rastafarians celebrate Emperor Haile Selassie as their Messiah. They take the name of their religion from the birth name of the emperor, Ras Tafari Makonnen, in essence Duke/"head" Tafari Makonnen. The messianic ascription of Selassie is not wholly without merit. Selassie traced his

heritage through the dynastic rulers of Ethiopia back to Queen Makeda, described in the Ethiopian book of origins, the Kebra Negast, as the Queen of Sheba. According to the story, a romantic liaison with King Solomon of Israel left Makeda pregnant with a son, whom she bore on her return to Ethiopia. Their son, Menelik, though raised in Ethiopia by Queen Makeda, eventually made a pilgrimage to Israel to meet his father. While there he learned the ways of the God of Israel from Solomon; and, when he returned to Ethiopia over his father's protest, he took with him what is thought to have been a replica of the ark of the covenant and a cadre of priests to administer the cult of YHWH in Ethiopia. The Kebra Negast suggests that from the time of Menelik the people of Ethiopia converted to Yahwism, that this was the major religion in Ethiopia until much of the nation converted to Christianity, and that the royal line of Ethiopian kings could be traced to the Davidic monarchy of ancient Israel.[22]

Haile Selassie is thus the final Davidic king to sit on a throne. In this regard, he was clearly an "anointed" one, hence the messianic association. As Marcus Garvey was departing from the United States, he pointed toward Ethiopia and referred to its rise in fulfillment of the Ethiopianist assertion found in the KJV's Ps 68:31 that "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." It is this "prophecy," as it was understood, that laid the groundwork for Rastafarianism.

Members of this group have had an extended love-hate relationship with the KJV. As Samuel Murrell and Lewin Williams note, Rastafarians tend to view the KJV with suspicion inasmuch as it was translated at the request of King James, a white man.[23] However, much of their own interpretive traditions are built upon this particular version of the Bible, which was primary for adherents of Rastafari. Rupert Lewis notes that for the members of this community, "the contents of this book [i.e., the KJV] represented the essential truth. People were accustomed to search the Bible for answers to their problems."[24] One of the answers that they found had to do with a principal sacrament for this faith, the use of marijuana, which is shared communally during "reasoning" sessions. The justification for this practice is in part based on the translational particularities of the KJV. In its translation of Gen 1:29 we see the phrase:

> And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

Another similarly translated verse is Ps 104:14:

> He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth.

In both of these instances, the particular translation of the KJV, which chooses the term *herb* as the translational equivalent of the Hebrew term *ʿēśeb* provides biblical justification for the sacramental use of marijuana (or ganja) and for their contention that Rastas should eat a healthy diet of organic foods, usually excluding meat.[25]

In addition, there are other of the KJV's translational peculiarities that the Rastafarians have utilized to establish their distinct religious beliefs and practices. According to Murrell and Williams, "Rastas name themselves gods, a view they derived from a rather curious, literal interpretation of the words of the King James Version: 'I said ye are gods' (Psalm 82:6)."[26] From a literalist reading of this verse, they have developed an elaborate equation that suggests that God is a human being and as human beings Rastas are themselves God. Again, a unique rendering of the text of the KJV has facilitated this distinctive Africana interpretation.

But, so that we do not think that it is only fringe Africana groups that have made much of the KJV's peculiar presentation of Scripture, I offer the following illustration. When I was catechized in preparation for ordination by the African American Baptist Conference in Washington, D.C., I was asked to memorize and be able to expound upon a number of key texts that formed the basis of our stated Baptist beliefs. Among these texts was 1 John 5:6–7:

> 6 This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. 7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

It is well known that this Trinitarian text has long been considered problematic inasmuch as it occurs only in relatively late witnesses to the Greek New Testament, and the Trinitarian variant in verse 7 is absent from the oldest and most reliable textual witnesses. Yet this text was used without qualification as the principal support for our doctrine of the Trinity. Inasmuch as the KJV served as the base text for the development of our particular Baptist catechesis and inasmuch as this translation offers a distinc-

tive witness to a Trinitarian formulation, it was, and likely still is, used uncritically to ground the theology of certain African American Baptists.

Place of the KJV in Contemporary African American Christianity

The KJV continues to be a significant resource for the faith and spiritual nurture of African American people. In preparation for this paper, I wanted to find out how the KJV was still viewed by contemporary blacks. In this regard, I put together a brief survey that consisted of ten questions that dealt with the usage of Scripture. Among the ten questions asked, seven dealt specifically with the respondents' or their religious community's preference of biblical translations. I asked the 87 respondents who hailed from across the United States the following questions:

1. What English version is used for worship in your congregation?
2. What English version do you use for your personal devotional studies?
3. Does your denomination have a favored English translation?
4. Does your church supply pew Bibles, and if so, in what version?
5. From which English version have you memorized Scripture?
6. Which English version is used for Christian education with the children and the youth of your congregation?
7. What is your opinion of the KJV?

Granted, the results of this survey are not scientific. They are skewed by the fact that the sample consists largely of African Americans with access to computers,[27] that the sample group is extraordinarily well educated,[28] that they are overwhelmingly Baptist,[29] and that the age range is skewed toward the middle.[30] But that said, I think the results of the survey are anecdotally indicative of the way that the African American community continues to value this centuries-old translation of the Bible.

Given the biases cited, it is still clear that African Americans have a special place in their hearts for the King James Bible. Of the participants, 48.3 percent said that they belong to a church that favors the KJV. When this number is combined with the number of people whose churches favor the NKJV, more than 72 percent use some form of the KJV. We might

surmise that this is the translation of the Bible that is used most often for liturgical purposes, to establish the text for sermons, and as a central component in contemporary worship in the vast majority of African American Christian congregations.

Similarly, 36 percent of those surveyed suggest that the KJV is the translation that their denomination favors, while 11 percent said that their denomination favored the NKJV. Together that indicates nearly 47 percent of those surveyed were in denominations that utilize some form of the KJV as their favored translation. Consistent with this, 59 percent of respondents said that their pew Bibles were either KJV (42.3 percent) or the NKJV (16.9 percent). The reason that this number was lower than we might expect could have something to do with the shift away from pew Bibles in many churches who are now projecting Scripture on screens during service or expecting congregants to bring their own Bibles, as several respondents noted. While it is not clear if the pew Bible preference is a matter of choice by pastors or denominational officials, or if church administrators tend to choose these versions because they are less expensive and therefore favored, it is clear that the prevalence of KJV Bibles in the pews perpetuates the notion that this version contains the Word of God as authorized by many African American churches and denominations.

For their personal study, the KJV continues to be the dominant translation used by the African Americans surveyed. More than 33 percent favor the KJV, and when combined with the 21 percent who favor the NKJV, fully 54 percent utilize a version of this translation. This statistic is more telling because it suggests that even when African Americans have a choice of which translation to select for their personal devotional practices, instead of selecting the numerous more readily comprehensible translations,[31] they gravitate toward the one that has been central to worship in black churches for centuries.

Perhaps most telling is the statistic that relates to the version of the Bible from which African Americans committed Scripture to memory. When asked this question, 82.8 percent of the people responded that they had memorized biblical passages from the KJV and 11.5 percent from the NKJV. In this instance, the 94 percent of the population's dependence on this version for scriptural memorization suggests that it remains a common "normative version" that has captured our collective imaginations either because it is the most favored, most available, least expensive, most utilized in worship, most poetic English version of the Bible, or because of some combination of these factors.

There are even hints of the importance of the KJV to this population in recent publications intended for African American communities. For example, when I worked as managing editor of the *African American Devotional Bible,* a project of the Congress of National Black Churches published by Zondervan in the mid-90s, we were told during an early planning meeting that the largest run of our Bibles would be done in the KJV. This was done in part because it was in the public domain and it would not cost the press anything to reproduce its content. But this decision was also made because of the publisher's knowledge of the extensive love affair that African American Christianity has had with this translation. Indeed, the Zondervan editors initially were reluctant to consider printing the devotional Bible in any other version (including the NIV, for which they owned the rights), until we on the development team convinced them that African Americans do read other versions of the Bible.

In a recent conversation with Cain Hope Felder, a New Testament biblical scholar who has edited *The Original African Heritage Study Bible* and the *Jubilee Legacy Bible,* both targeted at the African American Christian community, he noted that though he tends to prefer the RSV for its value as a translation, he was pressed by his publishing partners to make sure that these study Bibles would be based upon the KJV. The reasons that they gave for this were that the KJV continues to be the most popular version for African American Christians and that for many it is itself the "inspired word of God," not just one translation among many. As a biblical scholar well aware of the dangers that an unexamined acceptance of the KJV can pose in the contemporary world to gender parity, ethnic reconciliation, and textual and theological accuracy, Felder recognized the need to break the stranglehold that this version has on the African American community. But at the same time he acknowledged that to advocate for another dominant version would likely alienate the community he sought to transform with his scholarship. He recalled that at one event where he was selling his study Bibles after a lecture, a local African American clergyman came up to him and asked him if the book was done in the "word of God." When Felder asked what he meant by that, the preacher replied that he meant the KJV; and he was pleased to learn that it was.[32]

Recently, however, it appears that the African American affinity for the KJV may be in decline. Increasingly, contemporary black Christians are dissatisfied with the difficulties they have comprehending this version and are embracing other English versions of the Bible. These interpretive challenges are even evident in the resources that are currently being produced

for black Americans. For example, the *African American Jubilee Legacy: Spiritual Odyssey*, a companion volume to the *Jubilee Legacy Bible,* includes a sixteen-page glossary defining theological terms from the KJV that may not be readily understood by members of its audience.[33] The need for the *Legacy Bible* and others to spend time explicating terms whose parallels are comprehensible in other versions illustrates the need for African Americans to move beyond their normative acceptance of the KJV.

Change is necessary; but as Alice Bellis cautions in her article on teaching Bible in African American contexts, change must not be rigidly imposed by those who would like to expedite this social transformation:

> The place of honor that the KJV enjoys in black religious communities raises questions about which translation to use in English Bible courses. Black students are often willing to use other more contemporary translations, sometimes in conjunction with KJV, if the King James is not scorned. Here it is important to explain the differences, the advantages and disadvantages of the various versions.[34]

Over the past half century a number of new translations have steadily begun to erode those bonds. For instance, the growing popularity of the NKJV indicates that many African Americans have recognized that the antiquated English word choice of the KJV hampers contemporary readers' comprehension of Scripture. Further, the clarity and accessibility of the NIV translation has made it increasingly popular not only with the largely theologically conservative adult African American Christian community, but also for training the next generation of African American Christians.

More than a quarter (28.7 percent) of those surveyed said that the NIV is their congregation's translation of choice for pedagogical purposes with their children and youth,[35] cutting into the combined lead held by the KJV and NKJV of just over half (51.7 percent). When the NIV's quarter is combined with the NRSV's 16.1 percent, we can see that nearly half of those in the survey group (44.8 percent) indicate that their congregations are training up the next generation to value other translations. Such a shift may indicate that the African American community, which is now undeniably wed to the KJV, may have very different allegiances when the next generations of young people reaches middle age.

Notes

1. Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The Invisible Institution in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 311.

2. John Saillant, "Origins of African American Biblical Hermeneutics in Eighteenth-Century Black Opposition to the Slave Trade and Slavery," in *African Americans and the Bible: Sacred Texts and Social Textures* (ed. Vincent Wimbush; New York: Continuum, 2000), 236–37.

3. Alice Ogden Bellis, "The Bible in African American Perspectives," *Teaching Theology and Religion* 1 (1998): 162.

4. Stephen Breck Reid, *Experience and Tradition: A Primer in Black Biblical Hermeneutics* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990), 11.

5. Harriett Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl: Written by Herself* (Boston: Maria Stewart, 1861), 112.

6. Frederic May Holland, *Frederick Douglass: The Colored Orator* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1891), 14.

7. Ibid., 15.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., 16.

10. Ibid. On the biblical basis of African American literacy, see Isaac Lane, *The Autobiography of Bishop Isaac Lane with a Short History of the C.M.E. Church in America and of Methodism* (Nashville: Publishing House of the M. E. Church South, 1916), 48–49: "I learned to read and write under the greatest difficulties. I was not only deprived of a teacher, but I was not allowed the use of a book or a pencil. I had to learn the best I could. I soon found out what a great advantage it was to read and write, and I applied myself diligently to them as opportunities could be made. After the Civil War I established regular hours for the studying and the reading of God's Word, and these I have kept all of these years. I coveted the morning hours the most, although in the evening, when the hours for work were over, I would read and meditate until my candlelight or pine torch would fail me or my body would succumb to fatigue and I would fall asleep. The Bible, Binney's 'Theological Compend,' Clarke's 'Commentaries,' Watson's 'Bible Dictionary,' and Ralston's 'Elements of Divinity' were among the first books that I studied. These books I read with a fascination from which I have not escaped to this day."

11. Frederick Douglass, *The Narrative Life of Frederick Douglass, a Slave, Written by Himself* (Boston: Anti-Slavery Office, 1845), 121.

12. Ibid., 77.

13. William J. Anderson, *The Life and Narrative of William J. Anderson, Twenty-four Years a Slave* (Chicago: Daily Tribune Book and Job Printing Office, 1857), 44.

14. Ibid., 44–45. "Therefore I will trust in Him, as did Job, Peter, Paul and all the Apostles of old. O, like Jonah, I can almost say 'I have cried to God out of the belly of hell,' for some of these jails resemble a hell, and I have been in many of them in the United States; for where the slaveholders did not put me in, these mean Northerners or Free State men, both black and white, would concoct plans to imprison me. But,

bless the Lord, the old man Anderson still lives, while many of them are falling to rise no more. Yes, glory to God, I expect to shout Victory when the world is on fire.

"When I look back upon my past life I can see where I could have lived a better man, and it grieves me to think that I am not a better man than I am to-day; but I glorify and bless God it is no worse with me than it is. Yes, I feel happy to-day that my face is Zionward, and that my treasures are laid up in heaven. I can cheerfully pray for my persecutors, and thereby do good for evil. Yes, my soul feels happy to-day."

15. Martin Luther King Jr., "The Drum Major Instinct," in *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (ed. James M. Washington; San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1986), 259 (italics added).

16. Ibid., 266.

17. King, "Remaining Awake through a Great Revolution," in *Testament of Hope,* 275.

18. King, "I See the Promised Land," in *Testament of Hope*, 282.

19. George A. F. Knight, *Psalms* (2 vols.; Daily Study Bible; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982–1983), 1:315.

20. Rodney S. Sadler Jr., *Can A Cushite Change His Skin? An Examination of Race, Ethnicity, and Othering in the Hebrew Bible* (New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 135–37.

21. George M. Fredrickson, *Black Liberation: A Comparative History of Black Ideologies in the United States and South Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 57–93.

22. Nathaniel Samuel Murrell, "Introduction: The Rastafari Phenomenon," in *Chanting Down Babylon: A Rastafari Reader* (ed. Nathaniel Samuel Murrell, William David Spencer, and Adrian Anthony McFarlane; Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 1–19.

23. Nathaniel Samuel Murrell and Lewin Williams, "The Black Biblical Hermeneutics of Rastafari," in Murrell et al., *Chanting Down Babylon*, 327.

24. Rupert Lewis, "Marcus Garvey and the Early Rastafarians," in Murrell et al., *Chanting Down Babylon,* 147.

25. Murrell and Williams, "Black Biblical Hermeneutics of Rastafari," 328.

26. Ibid., 340.

27. I sent information about the survey out on Facebook and through my email network.

28. 62 percent of the survey group had at least some graduate education, and 37 percent of the rest had at least some college.

29. 41 percent Baptist, 16 percent nondenominational, 13 percent Methodist, and 11 percent Pentecostal, with a handful of UCC, Presbyterian, Church of Christ, and Episcopalian survey takers.

30. 45 percent, ages 36–50; 45 percent, ages 51–69; and only 10 percent, ages 20–35. Inasmuch as the surveyed group is older, there may be a greater likelihood that the group was raised prior to the time when newer versions (NRSV, NIV, Message) were available for widespread use.

31. The NIV has made significant inroads into African American Christianity, with 33.3 percent stating that they favored this version and 19.5 percent stating their preference for the NRSV.

32. Phone conversation with Cain Hope Felder on November 16, 2010, about the KJV.

33. Charles H. Smith and Cain Hope Felder, eds., *African American Jubilee Legacy: Spiritual Odyssey* (Nashville: Townsend, 2001), 333–49.

34. Bellis, "Bible in African American Perspectives," 162.

35. 28.7 percent said that their church chooses the NIV for children's and youth education, while the KJV is still used most (by 34.5 percent of respondents) and NKJV third most (by 16.2 percent of respondents). The NRSV, at 16.1 percent, is increasingly popular as well.

"A New Garb for the Jewish Soul": The JPS Bible in the Light of the King James Bible

Naomi Seidman

A New Bible for American Jews

In a field as well trodden as that of Bible translation, a would-be translator has two curiously dissimilar tasks. On the one hand, Bible translators at least since Jerome have insisted on the importance of "going back to the original text," of coming closer to this original than previous efforts had succeeded in doing. On the other hand, new translations, particularly in the modern period, also aspire to differentiate themselves from their precursors who have worked in the same language, to gain the sort of status that accrues to new translations and is justly withheld from mere revisions.[1] Proximity and distance are thus the double intertextual imperative, closeness to the source that manifests itself by the distance it puts between itself and its rivals. To put this another way, a translation must not only be *faithful* to the original, but also be *itself* an original.

This double task, to approach the Hebrew Bible afresh while withstanding the strong pull of earlier English attempts, was felt with particular force by the translators who, at the end of the nineteenth century, undertook to provide the growing American Jewish community with a Bible they could call their own. On the one hand, the translators frequently declared their special kinship with the Bible, their "intimate and full" knowledge of biblical languages and Jewish commentaries, which could ease their work and mark it as distinctively Jewish.[2] On the other hand, the English language already had a powerful precursor translation in the newly revised King James Version,[3] which cast a long shadow on their enterprise. That so many of the translators, including the three successive editors-in-chief of the project, Marcus Jastrow, Solomon Schech-

ter, and Max Margolis, were immigrants to the United States and nonnative English speakers no doubt rendered the gravitational pull of the King James Version that much more powerful.

The Jewish Publication Society's Bible translation was profoundly shaped by the context of the great Jewish immigrations from Eastern Europe of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But the reverse is also true: The JPS Bible played a crucial role in the drama of this immigration. The commission of a new Bible translation was among the first initiatives of the JPS, which was founded in 1888. The JPS was concerned, from the outset, with providing the immigrant community with books that represented American Jewish ideals and cultural achievements, in part as a way to combat Christian missionary efforts to provide literature to Jews and other immigrant communities. In 1892, at its second biannual convention, the JPS issued a resolution to furnish "a new and popular English rendition of the book which the Jews have given the world, the Bible, that shall be the work of American Jewish scholars."[4] This Bible should thus be *new*, uniquely American-Jewish, and reflect the special closeness of Jews to the Bible, the gift of the Jews to the world. Riding a wave of renewed American interest in the Bible among both Jews and Christians, the translation would introduce its readership to the scholarly achievements emerging from the new American-Jewish seminaries and colleges and provide American Jews with an English Bible in Jewish garb. As the preface to the translation put it,

> [T]he Jew cannot afford to have his Bible translation prepared for him by others. He cannot have it as a gift, even as he cannot have his soul from others. If a new country and a new language metamorphose him into a new man, the duty of this new man is to prepare a new garb and a new method of expression for what is most sacred and most dear to him.[5]

The JPS translation, then, was a cultural acquisition of symbolic as well as practical importance, bolstering Jewish and American-Jewish pride while demonstrating Jewish at-homeness in America, in the Hebrew and English languages, and in the translational space that constituted the American-Jewish hyphenated identity.

The assertion of Jewish difference and the participation in a larger culture here stand in no necessary contradiction. In a national culture that simultaneously valued religious pluralism and the Bible, Jewish self-assertion through a Jewish English Bible eased the difficult work

of American Jewish acculturation. The JPS Bible would be more than a product of American-Jewish integration. As a volume on the bookshelf of an American Jewish home or in the library of a Christian seminary (from which I borrowed my own copy), it could stand as the textual embodiment of American Jewish modernity.

However rousing the JPS's call in 1892 for a new American Jewish Bible, a call that was answered with alacrity by the best Bible scholars in the Jewish world, the translation did not appear until 1917, a full twenty-five years later. By contrast, the Hampton Court Conference at which the decision was made to authorize a new English translation took place in 1604 and the King James Bible was published in 1611, a mere seven years afterward. Why did the JPS take so much longer? With Leonard Greenspoon's invaluable biography of Margolis, based on extensive archival research, we are in the fortunate and rare position of being able to draw the curtains back on the complex and often hidden process of translation.[6]

There were three distinct stages to the translation work. During the first stage, from 1892 to 1908, individual scholars were assigned to work on a biblical book, which would then be sent to others in the group for consultation and revisions, and then on to the editor-in-chief and to a style editor for harmonization of the individual parts—not coincidentally in an era of Jewish immigration, two of three of these style editors, George Lyman Kittredge and James Montgomery, were the only Gentile participants in the project. The process, as became clear, was too cumbersome, and the initial lack of remuneration for the translators certainly did not speed matters. During this first period, as Jonathan D. Sarna writes, "the Society continued to issue rhapsodic reports of progress," while privately despairing that the translation would ever see the light of day.[7] The obstacles to completion should be depressingly familiar to anyone who has attempted a major academic collaboration: One status report from April 1903 shows that, a full ten years into the project, twelve of the thirty-seven biblical books were marked as "Not yet sent in," one deceased translator had not yet been replaced, and the translator of Ecclesiastes, who had been compliant enough to submit a draft, nevertheless stubbornly refused to accept any revisions.[8] The only completed book the JPS had to show for its efforts by that year was Rabbi Kaufmann Kohler's *Psalms*, which the society published to great acclaim as a separate volume. The editor-in-chief, Marcus Jastrow, had died a few months earlier. As Sarna writes, "Not a single word of the translation he had spent so long editing found its way into print during his lifetime." The project languished for sixteen months,

and after a burst of energy following the appointment of Solomon Schechter as the new editor-in-chief in 1905, was near collapse again with his resignation two years later.

The second stage lasted only from 1908 to 1909, but was vastly more productive. With the Reform movement's Central Conference of American Rabbis pressing for a Bible they could distribute to their synagogues and threatening to issue a "Jewish edition" of the English Revised Version (RV) of 1885, with the books reordered according to the masoretic tradition and with a "Jewish" appendix, the JPS awoke to the challenge and brought on board a new editor-in-chief, Max Leopold Margolis. Margolis was a distinguished Bible and rabbinics scholar who had taught at both the University of California, Berkeley, and the Hebrew Union College (HUC) in Cincinnati, and was soon to become Dropsie College's first faculty hire. Margolis was initially put under contract to compile a complete draft of the translation, on his own, in two years. In fact he produced his translation, largely the one published in 1917, in precisely eleven months, between September 1, 1908, and August 1, 1909, and collected a bonus.

The newly assembled editorial committee that had been charged with reviewing Margolis's work—in the third stage of the project—was not so expeditious. Over seven years (1909–1916) and sixteen meetings, each of which lasted ten or more days, the six-member group—comprising equal numbers of scholars and rabbis from three American Jewish institutions: the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), the HUC, and Dropsie College, with Margolis as chair—quibbled over dozens of major and minor points, and sometimes, it seemed, over nothing at all. As Solomon Schechter commented on the proceedings of the committee: "Put seven or eight clever men together, and they become so many fools."[9] Measures had to be taken to assure that the vehemently anti-Zionist Kohler would not sit beside the fervently Zionist Margolis. Cyrus Adler, chairman of the editorial committee for the JPS translation, would break up the tedium by taking the group to see such entertainments as the Ziegfeld Follies.[10] One telling resolution in the committee minutes attempted to obviate "interminable discussions in cases where the editors merely criticize or raise difficulties, but have nothing positive to offer instead."[11]

Despite the evident difficulties of both collaborative stages (as opposed to Margolis's rapid work on his own), the JPS seemed to be particularly proud of the collaborative nature of the enterprise, stressing in its publicity material that this was the first Jewish Bible translation into the English language done by a committee rather than an individual. It seems

clear that at least some of this pride derives from the fact that the JPS consciously emulated the process that had culminated in the King James Version. For the KJV, six "companies" of translators (two each at Westminster Abbey, Oxford University, and Cambridge University) worked simultaneously, achieving a balance between church and academy, high and low church, and the two rival universities. The JPS translation committee similarly drew from the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary, the Reform movement's Hebrew Union College, and the newly founded and nondenominational Dropsie College (now the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania).[12] It was true that JTS, HUC, and Dropsie were no Cambridge and Oxford, but by emulating the KJV, they signaled their cultural ambitions. What the JPS Bible emulated even more closely than this procedural model (which in the case of the KJV, worked admirably and expeditiously) was the King James translation itself. As Greenspoon points out, after twenty-five laborious and contentious years what the JPS Bible turned out to be was the King James Bible in its 1885 Revision, lightly judaized to conform with the traditional Jewish order of the Bible, and with overtly christological headings or renderings removed. This was already clear to Harry M. Orlinsky, who wrote that "in truth, the 1917 Jewish version was essentially but an extremely modest revision of the English Revised Version of 1885,"[13] although he also noted that the JPS had made a real contribution in printing its text "in the form of poetry when the Hebrew constituted poetry," and in putting direct discourse into quotation marks.[14] Orlinsky's own work on a new JPS translation—issued in 1985—was in fact partially motivated by the sense that a Jewish translation should not adhere so closely to an established non-Jewish translation; his committee thus worked with the Hebrew text, eschewing prior translations. The most important differences between the RV and the JPS were perhaps the title page and the preface, which proudly proclaimed both the newness and the Jewishness of this translation. Below the Hebrew words *Torah Nevi'im Ketuvim* (Pentateuch Prophets Writings), the title reads:

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES
ACCORDING TO THE MASORETIC TEXT
A NEW TRANSLATION
WITH THE AID OF PREVIOUS VERSIONS AND WITH
CONSTANT CONSULTATION OF JEWISH AUTHORITIES

Once one turns the page to Gen 1:1, it becomes clear how Margolis was able to complete his draft in eleven months—the text is almost identical to the 1885 RV of the KJV, although the JPS translation has "unformed" rather than "without form" in 1:2, and it is a lowercase "spirit" of God, rather than the uppercase and Trinitarian "Spirit" of God, that hovers over the face of the waters.[15] Greenspoon writes that on several occasions "Margolis referred to his work as a 'revision,' implying by his usually careful choice of words that he was dependent on an existing text, into which he introduced corrections and improvements."[16] Greenspoon examined the workbooks Margolis used in his translation, in which Margolis had pasted the text of a large-print RV text on larger blank pages, to provide room for revisions and comments.[17] The JPS 1917 translation is thus not a new translation at all but a minor revision of a minor revision of the KJV, although Margolis argued against Cyrus Adler's inclination to describe the text as a revision rather than a translation.[18] As Greenspoon delicately comments, the potentially awkward fact that the JPS Bible was a minor revision is not so much denied as rather obscured in the preface of the translation, which buries mention of the RV within an exceedingly long list of texts consulted (of which I have cited only the first part):

> In preparing the manuscript for the consideration by the Board of Editors, Professor Margolis took into account the existing English versions, the standard commentaries, ancient and modern, the translations already made for the Jewish Publication Society of America, the divergent renderings from the Revised Version prepared for the Jews of England, the marginal notes of the Revised Version, and the changes of the American Committee of Revisers. Due weight was given to the ancient versions as establishing a chain of interpretation, notably the Septuagint and the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, the Targums, the Peshitta, the Vulgate, and the Arabic version of Saadya.[19]

"It would be impossible for an outsider relying on an enumeration such as this," Greenspoon remarks, "to ascertain that the RV actually served as *the* basis for the translation he was about to read."[20]

However strategic or circumspect he was in the preface to the JPS Bible, in private correspondence and in a variety of publications Margolis spoke more openly about the inevitable reliance of the JPS translators on the (revised) King James Version. In 1917, the same year the JPS Bible finally appeared, Margolis also published a popular work on the history of Bible translation in which he writes that "no translation into the English

tongue can be anything but a revision" of the King James Version.[21] And writing in 1911, on the occasion of the three hundredth anniversary of the KJV, Margolis affirmed its importance precisely for American Jews:

> The English Bible is a classic. The best English writers have modeled their productions upon it. … The English of the Bible is a great force in the English that is written today. … As English-speaking Jews, we must be here receivers, not givers. Our children that are educated in the schools of the land get the influence of that great English classic at least indirectly, in every poem they memorize, in every oration they study. We of maturer years who have come to this country will fail of our purpose if we model our English upon the daily newspaper. … With the ephemeral subject goes the ephemeral diction. Our standards become vitiated and we measure the dignity of a language by its intelligibility at the hands of the illiterate immigrant, even though his date of arrival may be a half century ago. We Jews of America—and of England—must study the Bible in English, read it and re-read it, that we may possess ourselves of an English style which may pass scrutiny of the part of those who know.[22]

The Jews have given the world the Bible, but it was King James who gave it the Bible in English, it seemed to Margolis, and Jews must acknowledge its canonicity and supremacy, if not on the title pages of their own translations, then less directly in the production of these translations. The logic of Margolis's translational reliance on the KJV is clear: In order to possess himself of a proper English style for *any* purpose—much less for translating the Bible!—an immigrant writer such as Margolis could do no better than to study and reread the King James Bible. After such preparation, it would be odd indeed to come up with any translation that was *not*, more or less, the KJV. After twenty-five laborious years, however, it must have been somewhat difficult for Margolis and the JPS to admit, even to themselves, that what the JPS translation had accomplished was Jewish primarily in what could be called its packaging. Lest this judgment seem too harsh, it is worth remembering that the KJV itself, for all its singular status, relied heavily on its own multiple precursors. The line between translation and revision is often less clear than we imagine.[23]

Jewish Translation in an American-Jewish Key

For all this reliance on the KJV, there is no doubt that Margolis and his collaborators deeply felt the Jewishness of their project—nor should we

ourselves doubt it. Margolis argued for the special closeness of the Jew with the Bible: "Only a Jew can say on approaching Holy Writ: this is flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bones."[24] That he borrowed from KJV's memorable rendering here complicates but does not undermine the strength of Margolis's association. The Jewish closeness to the Bible is one that exceeds that of ordinary kinship or marriage, suggesting the very concretion of love and identity: Just as Eve was shaped from a piece of Adam, so too is the Bible of a piece with the Jew. And even when through time and translation the Bible moves away from the Jew, or the Jew from the Bible, they return to each other and are unified, just as a man cleaves unto his wife.

The elaborate metaphor may have a literal resonance in Margolis's case. Margolis did his most productive work not with the editorial committee charged with "helping" him but rather during his year at home, where his wife was his sole coworker (and "helpmeet"), drawing a monthly salary of $25 for her secretarial duties, which—as is often the case—far transcended the secretarial. Evelyn Margolis came from a well-established American Jewish family (Barry Goldwater, the 1964 Republican presidential nominee, was a much-younger cousin), was a UC Berkeley graduate in history and economics, and had traveled widely in Europe. As Margolis described her, Evelyn was "a refined, educated girl," who "answered his ideal" after he had given up on ever finding a mate—he was thirty-nine when they met. Greenspoon gives the flavor of Evelyn's contribution to the translation:

> In order to prepare for the work, both she and her husband had reread Shakespeare, Marlowe, Ben Jonson and every possible Elizabethan author to (in Evelyn's words) "steep ourselves in the language of the times for the full flavor of the period. …" Many times, as her husband was considering the translation of a certain phrase or word, Mrs. Margolis remembers, "he would turn to me and say, 'Repeat this phrase. How does it sound? How would you say it?'"[25]

In this regard, the JPS translation may owe yet another quality to the KJV, which was famously also read aloud during the translation process for its music. It was not the "balanced" (or unbalanced) committee of male dignitaries that produced the particular music of the JPS Bible, but the less canonical model of the husband-wife translator team, in which translation is figured as intimate orality and marital conversation rather than as quasi-judicial legislation. As in the famous team of Russian-English literary translators Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, or, to move to Jewish Bible translators, Chana and Ariel Bloch, cotranslators of *The Song*

of Songs, one spouse had a native (or near-native) command of the source language while the other was a native speaker of the target tongue. The JPS translation thus brought together Hebrew and English, ancient and modern, embodying an ideal fusion of these languages and cultural contexts. Less visibly or famously, it also brought together a traditionally educated Bible scholar and recent immigrant (who, in 1891, had written his Columbia University dissertation in Latin, in which he felt more comfortable than English) and his acculturated American-Jewish wife. Margolis's aspirations to command a beautiful and dignified English style and his desire to wed a "refined, educated girl" were parallel impulses and, in the JPS translation work, found simultaneous satisfaction.

The contributions of Margolis's Eastern European heritage are perhaps less in evidence in this linguistic-marital relationship, but they make an unexpected appearance in the very last pages of his 1917 popular work, *The Story of Bible Translation*. Commenting on the cultural specificities of languages as the prime obstacles and channels to translation (that is, on the inseparability of signifier and signified), Margolis writes about the ways that Jewish culture gives Jews unique access to the Hebrew Bible:

> The name travels with the thing, as for instance *kindergarten*; somehow we cannot translate *esprit* or *weltanschauung*; and French and German writers retain untranslated English terms like *sport* and *gentleman*, distinct products of the British civilization. Every Jew knows what is meant by *eshet hail*; a pure and pious and kind and charitable woman indeed, but also one that possesses power and ability, faithfully attending to her household duties, rising early and toiling all day long that her husband and children may have their comforts. But when in Proverbs 31.10 the King James Bible denominates her a *virtuous* woman, the adjective is certainly too narrow in the modern sense of the word.[26]

If "every Jew knows what is meant by *eshet hail*," it is because the *eshes hayil* (in the Eastern European pronunciation; אשת חיל in the Hebrew Bible) is a Jewish "type," used descriptively in recognition of a cultural pattern as distinctive as the *sport* or the *gentleman*. As Iris Parush writes, while traditional Eastern European Jewish society as so many others conceived of women as belonging to the domestic sphere, such a model of ideal womanhood was often supplemented or replaced by a different model,

> that of a "woman of valor" (Proverbs 31:10), that is, an ideal of the woman breadwinner, who lets her husband devote all his time to the

> study of Torah and to the fulfillment of his religious vocation. … Even if in practice not all men were Talmud scholars … even if most men earned an income and not all of their time was allocated to Torah study, the fact that the society strove to realize its ideal vision—in which men indeed would devote all their time to fulfilling their religious vocation—sufficed to establish behavioral norms that put the burden of income generation largely on the shoulders of women.[27]

The woman breadwinner was not just a cultural model for traditional Eastern European Jewish marital arrangement; she was also among the figures and traditional types most criticized by modernizers and reformers, who abhorred the economic activity of Jewish women and their visibility in such public spheres as the marketplace. As Iris Parush describes it, modernizing reformers decried the Jewish woman's role as overly "male," insofar as "she has to trade with the gentiles, travel to fairs, and provide for her family."[28] In acknowledging the cultural salience for Jews of the figure of the *'eshet hayil*, and in contrasting her with the *sport* and *gentleman*, Margolis was not only claiming special Jewish insight into biblical matters, he was also delicately hinting at one of the most charged intersections between tradition and modernity, Jewish and bourgeois-Gentile conceptions of proper gender roles and the marital distribution of labor. Americanization and *embourgeoisement*, central forces in the JPS program and indeed in Margolis's own life, were deeply enmeshed with such questions as proper Jewish gender roles; from the bourgeois perspective, the Jewish woman who supported her scholarly husband so he could spend time at the city gates where Prov 31:23 finds him was a troubling embarrassment. Margolis's allusion to this traditional gender system under attack thus brings us up against not only the problem of translating Hebrew into English, but also the difficulties of "translating" Eastern European Jews into polite English-speaking society.

Margolis's insistence that "every Jew knows what is meant by *eshet hail*" may have had yet another meaning: the passage in Proverbs in which this woman is described is etched in Jewish memory because it is part of the traditional Friday night Sabbath home ritual, sung by a husband to his wife as ritualized praise on his return from the synagogue; the passage's alphabetic acrostic structure serves as a useful mnemonic aid for such liturgical purposes.[29] The *'eshet hayil*—woman of valor or virtue—may have been rarer than rubies as far as Proverbs was concerned, but for centuries every Jewish household had one.

The tension between the rarity of such a woman, proclaimed in verse 10, and the plentitude of such paragons of womanly virtue, acknowledged in verse 29, is embedded in the song itself, which begins with the impersonal narratorial voice asking a rhetorical question in the third person—A woman of valor who can find?—and moves, in verse 29, to the voice of a husband speaking directly to his wife: "many daughters have done valiantly, but you have surpassed them all." While the unnamed narrator distinguishes the woman of valor from the multitudes of inadequate women, the husband praises "many women," while still insisting that his own wife surpasses the others. And we know that Margolis was struck by this sometimes overlooked doubling in the structure of the passage, and insisted on bringing verse 29 linguistically closer to the opening of the praise poem, in part to avoid allowing the opening question to impugn Jewish women's honor by leaving the impression that the narrator of Proverbs knew only one such woman.[30]

Gender Bias, Jewish Apologetic, and the Translation of *'Eshet Hayil*

The JPS Bible, as Margolis implies in his discussion of this passage in his *Story of Bible Translation*, abandoned the English RV (the 1885 revision of the KJV) over the question of how to translate *'eshet hayil* and went its own way, secure that, at least in this one matter, Jewish men knew best. They did so not only by adding the Hebrew letters before each line (see the sample text on p. 493), but also by significantly revising the English translation, coining the term "a woman of valor," which many have seen as the most important linguistic contribution JPS Bible made to American Jewish English, and to Bible translation. It is striking that this term, which referred to a traditional Jewish type that was rapidly becoming obsolete, should have found such cultural resonance, speaking not only to readers of the Bible and to traditional Jews but also to new generations of secularizing and acculturating American Jewish audiences and beyond. It was not the KJV's "woman of virtue" but the JPS translation's "woman of valor" that made its way into the titles of books and the plaques given to women activists and philanthropists—and not only Jewish ones. Whatever *'eshet hayil* meant to traditional Ashkenazic Jews (not to mention to ancient Israelites!), among the multiple virtues encoded in its acrostic were some that continued to hold charm within a culture that discovered and prized new varieties of women's public and communal activity.

The point Margolis makes in his discussion of Prov 31 is that the strictly philological question—what exactly is an *'eshet hayil*?—can hardly be separated from the cultural knowledge that aids (or impedes) our understanding of the term. In such cases, to put it in Greenspoon's terms, "we are dealing with semantics or even chauvinisms."[31] Such issues were particularly charged not only for modern Jews but also for modern women, and for feminists above all. The problem of how to translate Prov 31:10 and 29, a major sticking point of the JPS editorial committee in their final round of work in 1916, was also evident to the Protestant feminist theologian Katherine Bushnell, who chose it as the parade case for her lessons on "sex bias" in biblical translation (a hundred of these Bible studies were published in 1923 as *God's Word to Women*). Bushnell writes:

> Next we will consider the Hebrew word *cha-yil*, which occurs 242 times in the Old Testament. It is translated "army" and "war" 58 times; "host" and "forces" 43 times; "might" or "power" 16 times; "goods," "riches," "substance" and "wealth" in all 31 times; "band of soldiers," "band of men," "company," and "train" once each; "activity" once; "valor" 28 times; "strength" 11 times: these are all noun forms. The word is often translated as an adjective or adverb. It is translated "valiant" and "valiantly" 35 times; "strong" 6 times; "able" 4 times; "worthily" once and "worthy" once. We have now given you the complete list of the various renderings of this word *excepting four instances in which the word is used in describing a woman*.[32]

Hayil, in other words, is a perfectly transparent Hebrew word with a recognizable and related range of significations—might, power, strength, and wealth. Translators have no difficulty understanding this word, except, that is, when it is applied to women. These problems are not inevitable: the earliest translations, Bushnell shows, were not shy about reading *hayil* in Proverbs as essentially congruent with the word in its numerous other biblical instantiations. Thus the Septuagint forthrightly glosses *'eshet hayil* in Proverbs as *gynaika andreian* (a manly or courageous woman), while translating the same phase in Ruth 3:11 as *gynē dynameōs* (a woman of strength or power); the Vulgate similarly has *mulier fortis* (a strong woman) in Prov 31.[33] Nevertheless, as Bushnell argues, newer translations have overwhelmingly tended to efface any connection between these estimable women and manliness, strength, or power. Discussing English translations of Prov 31:10, which she claims is by "a woman writer" recommending the ideal wife for her son, Bushnell writes:

> [T]he description of this ideal woman is summed up in the 29th verse, in the words: *"Many daughters have done* cha-yil*, but thou excellest them all.* "Worthily," "valiantly," are the only translations that we have in any other part of the Bible for this word, when used as an adverb. But after the same careless manner, the word is here translated "virtuously." We suppose there was an instinctive distaste, disrelish, for showing that the Bible praised, in the inspired words of a woman writer, a "strong" woman, for doing "valiantly."[34]

Despite the similarities between Margolis's and Bushnell's insight that *hayil* was a sticking point for translators because of their cultural blindness, there are also important differences in their approaches to the problem. Bushnell's view, stated often throughout her Bible studies—though not in this section—was that a great share of biblical misinterpretations were due to an overreliance on Jewish commentators; what distinguishes her own readings is her ability to read the Hebrew and Greek herself, and thus her independence from translators and commentators—especially Jewish ones: "we will accept no views as authoritative," she writes in lesson 3, "simply because that book, so valued among the Jews, the Talmud, teaches them." The feminist Christian can do no better than entirely reject not only the Talmud but also the masoretic pointing, which is also a rabbinic invention detrimental to women. Bushnell makes this point even in lesson 1:

> And then, women must never forget that all this addition to the text [the masoretic vowels] was not only the work of men exclusively, but of men who, in their day, were, as Jews, bitter opponents of the teachings and of the spirit of Christianity. Furthermore, if we may judge from the spirit of the teachings of the Talmud on "the woman question" (for the Talmud was then in ascendancy, and the sayings of the rabbis considered more authoritative than Scriptures itself), these amenders of the original text, as a class, held women in utter contempt. Dr. Paul Isaac Hershon (to quote one of the many witnesses to this statement) says: "The rabbis, over and over again, teach the utter inferiority of woman: they put a definite seal, as it were, on the degraded life of the female sex which for ages has been lived by women in the East as in the West."[35]

Bushnell's approach, to reclaim an "original" reading of Hebrew Scriptures untainted by Jewish perspectives (and even Jewish vowels!), is a familiar one in Christian exegetical history, and it stands in direct contrast with Margolis's claim to understand both Hebrew and scriptural views on women precisely through Jewish knowledge. In fact, Bushnell makes no

specific claims that the misunderstanding of Prov 31 derives from Jewish postbiblical teachings; she may not have been able to, if Shulamit Valler is correct that rabbinic literature supports and at times even amplifies Proverbs' praise for the *'eshet hayil*'s "activities within the wider circles of society, community and nation."[36] Nevertheless, the anti-Jewish (or antirabbinic) attitudes that pervade Bushnell's work may illuminate some of the difficulties the JPS faced in finding precisely the right note to strike with Prov 31, in which the press of gender ideologies were complicated by the perceived need to defend Jewish gender attitudes on a range of grounds and from a variety of different directions. Such an apologetic stance may be evident, for instance, in Margolis's insistence, in *The Story of Bible Translation*, that he knows—as a Jew—what the *'eshet hayil* is: a "pure and pious and kind and charitable woman indeed, but also one that possesses power and ability, faithfully attending to her household duties, rising early and toiling all day long that her husband and children may have their comforts." While the *'eshet hayil*'s piety and—especially—kindness are described in Proverbs, nothing in the text suggests that she is "pure," a point Bushnell herself makes in commenting on the KJV:

> We must suppose that the translators hastily concluded that they knew, without looking closely at the original, what sort of a woman a mother *ought to recommend* to her son for a wife, and so they translated: *"Who can find a* virtuous *woman?"* That represents the undoubted sentiments of the translators; but it *does not represent* the teaching of the original text.[37]

Margolis is certainly aware that virtue, in the sense of sexual purity, has no basis in the Hebrew. Nevertheless, he begins his expanded description of the *'eshet hayil* with precisely that term, as if to say that, in rejecting the KJV's "woman of virtue," he is not suggesting—God forbid!—that the Jewish woman is *not* virtuous, pious, or "pure." Nevertheless, any discussion of her purity is solely an apologetic generated either by the KJV translators' sexist translation or, at best, by a modern misreading of the KJV's "virtue," which might mean, as the Latinist Margolis knew, virtue in the sense of manliness. For all Bushnell's disdain for the KJV translation of "a woman of virtue," she also recognized that "virtue" did not necessarily unambiguously signal sexual purity, and its use might be defended on a number of grounds:

> "But," someone will reply, "virtue is often used in the sense of a summing up of all moral characteristics." That may be; but it would not be

> so understood by the common folk, in this connection, and the Bible is supposed to be translated for them. The vast majority, reading this verse, would suppose the word "virtue" to refer to the woman's chastity.[38]

Whatever the KJV meant, the term "woman of virtue" is inappropriate, Bushnell argues, given the way it would be understood by "the common folk." The KJV translators may have reflected the Latin in translating "a woman of virtue," building on the etymological derivation of the term virtue in the Latin *vir* (man). But by the twentieth century virtue had come to mean goodness and, especially in relation to women, sexual faithfulness (as in the negative term, a woman of "easy virtue"). Among the many praiseworthy qualities of the woman in Prov 31, her sexual faithfulness seems not to have crossed the biblical writer's mind.

The distinction between the proper philological meaning of "virtue" in the KJV and its potential misinterpretation by uneducated readers was, as Greenspoon shows, also a feature of the JPS discussion, where it played out in rather different ways. Despite his critique in *The Story of Bible Translations* of the KJV's "woman of virtue," Margolis in fact retained that translation in his draft and actively lobbied in favor of that rendering with his editorial committee. The argument among the editorial committee over the choice between virtue and valor was in fact the last of their translation disputes, initially resolved in favor of valor in Prov 31:10 during a ten-day meeting in late 1915 but requiring further attention because the committee had failed to address the issue in Prov 31:29; the dispute thus continued in months of heated correspondence, in which resolution was complicated by the deaths, in the meantime, of two of the most senior and distinguished members of the committee, Solomon Schechter and Joseph Jacobs. In the end, the champions of the term "woman of valor" were victorious and Margolis's own choice of "woman of virtue" went down in defeat.[39]

The initial debate, at the final editorial meeting, indeed seemed to revolve around ideology rather more than philology: Rabbis Samuel Schulman and David Philipson argued for "woman of valor," with Schulman claiming that, in his opinion, "the Board adopted 'valorous' correctly because what a man of valor is in battle, the woman of valor is in her home." Margolis's argument was equally touched by gender ideology: according to Cyrus Adler's minutes, Margolis was of the opinion that "there is a quality of masculinity in the word 'valour' that does not comport with the woman." One alternative proposal Margolis put forward was "a woman of worth" (which is Robert Alter's choice in his new transla-

tion),[40] though Schulman and Philipson found the same difficulty with the term "worth" or "worthy" (as it appeared again in the echo of v. 29) as with the KJV's "virtuous"; not only did it fail to capture the essence of *hayil* but was actively misleading. While "worth" and, in verse 29, "worthy," as Alter's note makes clear, could be understood as referring to the woman's acquisition of wealth, these associations could as easily point to the kind of praise for feminine goodness that the translators considered foreign to Jewish Bibles, and native to Christian ones.

Margolis fought the matter at the meeting and in correspondence afterward, arguing for an etymological reading of the word "virtuous," which, in his words, "is to be taken as an archaism in the sense of 'endowed with *virtus*' (in the Latin meaning of manliness)." He was also willing to accept "a woman of worth," which, as he said, "is totally different from 'a worthy woman.' But if the JPS feels that that is too weak, well, then, let the archaism 'virtuous' remain." Thus Margolis, who was unwilling to accept the term "valor" as unwomanly, was willing to let the more directly masculine "virtuous" be linked to his woman, *as long as this masculine association could be detected only by the philologist*—while all others would be led to the appropriate misreading. Margolis, just like Bushnell, is well aware that the KJV might be considered an accurate reading, but that it is also very likely to be misunderstood. For Bushnell, this likelihood militated against its use. For Margolis, on the other hand, the likelihood that readers would see the *'eshet hayil* as sexually pure spoke rather in favor. Here it is not only "chauvinisms" that direct the translator's hand, but also Jewish sensitivities to the light an English Bible for Jews would shed on Jewish attitudes toward women, and Jewish women themselves.

It was Adler, and not Margolis, who finally resolved the matter by reverting to the vote at the final meeting, letting the 1915 decision for "woman of valor" remain and retroactively correcting the committee's failure to translate verse 29 in conformity with verse 10; this last detail was in fact Margolis's recommendation and produced the translation: "many daughters have done valiantly." Margolis's thinking derived not only from his literary ear, his attention to the meaningful repetitions of the biblical text, but also from his Jewish chivalry, since he worried that the initial reference to the rarity of the woman of valor impugned women in general and perhaps Jewish women in particular, and wanted to make sure that, as verse 29 had it, these readers might hear that women of valor were actually more numerous than the narrator had immediately implied.

The JPS translation was not alone in turning a critical eye on the KJV's "virtuous woman," a rendering that was to be stricken from nearly all the revisions and new translations of the Bible in the period that followed (although Elizabeth Cady Stanton's 1895 Woman's Bible still had "A woman of virtue").[41] The 1901 Revised American Version had, for verse 10: "A worthy woman who can find?" The Revised Standard Version of 1952 had, in verse 10, "a capable woman who can find?" and in 29 "many women have done excellently." But of the great revisions of this period, the JPS Bible may have been the only one to try to signal the military dimension of the Hebrew *hayil*, which is generally seen as its first signification. In this, the translators made their mark on modern Bible translation, a mark that was also an act of Jewish self-assertion.

The Immigrant as Translator

Following the career of the term *hayil* thus provides us a window not only into a complex philological issue, but also into the gender and interreligious politics of a number of different eras—and our own is an era where these dilemmas have grown no clearer. What emerges in Margolis's case is evidence that ideological differences appear not only within translation committees but also within a single translator. What should we make of the contradiction between Margolis's arguing for the use of the term "a woman of virtue" for months in 1916, against those who preferred "woman of valor," while in a book published in 1917, he praised the JPS translators' choice of "a woman of valor" as evidence of special Jewish cultural knowledge of the Bible? Did he come around to see the justice of his colleagues' position? Was he just being a *sport* and a *gentleman* in defending the majority decision, even if his own minority position had lost? What does it mean that he defended "a woman of virtue" on the grounds that it was philologically correct in pointing to the woman's manliness, while recognizing and perhaps even hoping that it would be misunderstood as referring to a woman's sexual faithfulness? And what does it mean that his work with his own industrious *eshes hayil* Evelyn produced the feeble adopted offspring of the KJV's "a woman of virtue" while an entire male committee fought for and triumphed with the more robust "woman of valor"?

While it is tempting to read these translations in the light of Jewish-Christian translational difference, I think this would be an overreach: the JPS translation is a Jewish translation not only in its claim to

Hebrew-linguistic as well as Jewish-cultural capital, or in its Jewish packaging, readership, and intended audience. It is Jewish not only in Margolis's astonishing command of biblical languages, traditional rabbinic commentaries, and other sources. It is *also* Jewish—maybe *particularly* Jewish—in its borrowing from the King James Bible, in its immigrant awe at the KJV's powerful cadences and exalted registers. These cadences were perhaps particularly inspiring when these immigrants could detect, under the King's English, the familiar Hebrew component, when alongside the English woman of valor they could also trace their fingers along the strong spine of the aleph-beth acrostic rendered visible in the JPS version of Prov 31. It was this *'eshet hayil* who made a home for them in this country, in her virtue as in her valor and in the argument between them. Both the borrowing from the King James Bible and their own awakening to what they might know that KJV did not were moments in the acculturation and self-assertion of American Jews. In this passage and in the translation as a whole the translators embraced what was closest to them and what was furthest away, the Friday evening melodies of their childhoods and the royal English toward which they bent their ears and their prose. ED/AQ: need to mention much earlier that you include these translations here?

Proverbs 31:10–30

English Revised Version (1885) of the King James Version (1611)

10 Who can find a virtuous woman?
for her price [is] far above rubies.
11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her,
so that he shall have no need of spoil.
12 She will do him good and not evil
all the days of her life.
13 She seeketh wool, and flax,
and worketh willingly with her hands.
14 She is like the merchants' ships;
she bringeth her food from afar.
15 She riseth also while it is yet night,
and giveth meat to her household,
and a portion to her maidens.
.....

28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed;
her husband [also], and he praiseth her.
29 Many daughters have done virtuously,
but thou excellest them all.
30 Favour [is] deceitful, and beauty [is] vain:
[but] a woman [that] feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.
31 Give her of the fruit of her hands;
and let her own works praise her in the gates.

Jewish Publication Society Version 1917

א 10 A woman of valour who can find?
for her price is far above rubies.
ב 11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her,
and he hath no lack of gain.
ג 12 She doeth him good and not evil
all the days of her life.
ד 13 She seeketh wool and flax,
and worketh willingly with her hands.
ה 14 She is like the merchant-ships;
she bringeth her food from afar.
ו 15 She riseth also while it is yet night,
And giveth food to her household,
And a portion to her maidens.
.....
ק 28 Her children rise up, and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praiseth her:
ר 29 "Many daughters have done valiantly,
but thou excellest them all."
ש 30 Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain;
but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.
ת 31 Give her of the fruit of her hands;
and let her works praise her in the gates.

Revised Standard Version (1952)

10 A good wife who can find?

She is far more precious than jewels.
11 The heart of her husband trusts in her,
and he will have no lack of gain.
12 She does him good, and not harm,
all the days of her life.
13 She seeks wool and flax,
and works with willing hands.
14 She is like the ships of the merchant,
she brings her food from afar.
15 She rises while it is yet night
and provides food for her household
and tasks for her maidens.
.....
28 Her children rise up and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praises her:
29 "Many women have done excellently,
but you surpass them all."
30 Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain,
but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.
31 Give her of the fruit of her hands,
and let her works praise her in the gates.

Jewish Publication Society Version 1985 Edition (NJV)

א 10 What a rare find is a capable wife!
Her worth is far beyond that of rubies.
ב 11 The husband puts his confidence in her,
And lacks no good thing.
ג 12 She is good to him, never bad,
All the days of her life.
ד 13 She looks for wool and flax,
And sets her hand to them with a will.
ה 14 She is like a merchant fleet,
Bringing her food from afar.
ו 15 She rises while it is still night,
And supplies provisions for her household,
The daily fare of her maids.
.....
ק 28 Her children declare her happy;

Her husband praises her:
ר 29 "Many daughters have done well,
But you surpass them all."
ש 30 Grace is deceptive,
Beauty is illusory;
It is for her fear of the LORD,
That a woman should be praised.
ת 31 Extol her for the fruit of her hand;
And let her works praise her in the gates.

Robert Alter (from *Wisdom Books*)

10 A worthy woman who can find?
Her price is far beyond rubies.
11 The heart of her husband trusts her,
and no price does he lack.
12 She repays him good and not evil
all the days of her life.
13 She seeks out wool and flax
and performs with willing hands.
14 She is like merchant ships,
from afar she brings her bread.
15 She gets up while it is still night
and provides nourishment for her house
and a portion for her young women.
.....
28 Her sons rise and call her happy
her husband, he praises her:
29 "Many daughters have done worthy things,
but you—you surpass them all."
30 Grace is a lie and beauty a mere breath—
a LORD-fearing woman, it is she who is praised.
31 Give her from the fruit of her hands,
and let her deeds praise her in the gates.

NOTES

1. The prizing of novelty in translation seems to be primarily a feature of the post-Romantic period, as part of the new modern focus on authorship. By contrast,

such pre-Romantic translators as those of the King James were eager to establish the authority of their project by referring to the many precursors on whom they relied. As the translators' preface reads, "Truly (good Christian Reader) we never thought from the beginning that we should need to make a new Translation … but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one." For discussion, see Alister McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, A Language, and a Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 177.

2. Max L. Margolis, "A Jewish Translation of the Scriptures," *B'nai B'rith News,* May, 1913, 10.

3. From the mid-seventeenth century through the nineteenth century the KJV was in effect the only English Bible in use throughout the English-speaking world. With the emergence of biblical criticism it became clear by the end of the nineteenth century that the KJV was not based on the best manuscripts. In 1885 the English Revised Version Bible, the work of mostly British scholars, was published. It was a highly literal (some would say "wooden") translation that endeavored to incorporate recent scholarly findings from manuscript and grammatical studies. The English RV was followed in 1901 by the American Standard Version, the work of American scholars who, in addition to adapting the text for its American audience, replaced more archaic words than the English RV had done and made other improvements to enhance the readability of the text. Descendants of these KJV revisions include the Revised Standard Version (1952) and the New Revised Standard Version (1989).

4. The Second Biennial Report of the Jewish Publication Society (1892), 28; cited in Jonathan D. Sarna, *JPS: The Americanization of Jewish Culture 1888–1988* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1989), 97.

5. "Preface," *The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text: A New Translation with the Aid of Previous Versions and with Constant Consultation of Jewish Authorities* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1917), viii.

6. Leonard Greenspoon, *Max Leopold Margolis: A Scholar's Scholar* (Society of Biblical Literature Biblical Scholarship in North America 15; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987). See especially the chapter on "Bible Translation," 55–75. See also the essay by Leonard Greenspoon in this volume, 273–95.

7. Sarna, *JPS*, 100.

8. Ibid., 100–102.

9. Quoted in Leonard Greenspoon, "A Book 'without Blemish': The Jewish Publication Society's Bible Translation of 1917," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 79 (1988): 8.

10. Cyrus Adler, *I Have Considered the Days* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1945), 288. Quoted in Greenspoon, "Book 'without Blemish,'" 9.

11. Letter by Margolis dated May 27, 1910, quoted in Greenspoon, "Book 'without Blemish,'" 11.

12. Sarna, "Jewish Bible Scholarship," 99.

13. Harry M. Orlinsky, "The New Jewish Version of the Torah: Toward a New Philosophy of Bible Translation," in *Essays in Biblical Culture and Bible Translation* (New York: Ktav, 1974), 399.

14. For discussion see Harry M. Orlinsky, "Chiefly the Hebrew Bible," in Harry M. Orlinsky and Robert G. Bratcher, *A History of Bible Translation and the North Ameri-*

can Contribution (Society of Biblical Literature Biblical Scholarship in North America; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 144.

15. See n. 3 for more about the American Standard Version (1901), the text Margolis relied upon.

16. Greenspoon, *Margolis*, 64.

17. Ibid., 67.

18. The question of "translation" versus "revision" is preserved in correspondence between Adler and Margolis in the JPS archives, and discussed in Greenspoon "Book 'without Blemish,'" 16–18. Although Adler and Margolis argued about the "pretentiousness" of calling the JPS Bible a translation, Greenspoon comments that it was "not really a matter of pretension but rather accuracy" (17).

19. "Preface," *Holy Scriptures According to Masoretic Tradition*, vii.

20. Greenspoon, *Max L. Margolis*, 66.

21. Margolis, *Story of Bible Translations*, 104.

22. Max L. Margolis, "The Tercentenary of the English Bible," *B'nai B'rith News,* April, 1911, 10.

23. Greenspoon makes a similar point, describing the difference between translations and revisions as "a matter of degree: no translator, however original, is totally unaware of earlier renderings, nor is even the most slavish reviser without knowledge of the foreign language text that stands behind the earlier translation with which he works" ("Book 'without Blemish,'" 17).

24. Margolis, *Story of Bible Translations*, 106. Margolis seemed to have been fond of this phrase, and it also appears verbatim in an earlier essay in the new series of *Jewish Quarterly Review*. The quote continues: "He must possess himself, it is true, of the philological method and of the completest apparatus; but he alone can add thereto that which ensures fullest comprehension: the love for his own, for the thought that makes the innermost soul to throb, which still lives in him albeit faintly, so that his understanding of the Scriptures, mediated though it be by philological effort, becomes to a considerable extent indeed immediate, just as the language of Scriptures is to him in a large measure a living tongue" ("The Scope and Methodology of Biblical Philology," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 1 [1910]: 32).

25. This information is taken from a pamphlet entitled *Mrs. Max L. Margolis, A Biographical Appreciation on Her Seventy-Fifth Birthday* (Wednesday, January 21, 1953, Ritz Carlton Hotel, Philadelphia), 14. Quoted in Greenspoon, *Max L. Margolis*, 70.

26. Margolis, *Story of Bible Translations*, 120–21.

27. Iris Parush, *Reading Jewish Women: Marginality and Modernization in Nineteenth-Century Eastern European Jewish Society* (trans. Saadya Sternberg; Waltham, Mass.: Brandeis University Press, 2004), 39.

28. Ibid., 45.

29. For a discussion of this ritual, see Yael Levine, "The Woman of Valor in Jewish Ritual (Proverbs 31:1–31)" (Hebrew), *Beit Mikra* 31 (1986): 339–47.

30. For a discussion of this exchange, see Greenspoon, "Book 'without Blemish,'" 12–13.

31. Ibid., 13.

32. Katherine Bushnell, "Lesson 78: Sex Bias Influences Translators," in *God's Word to Women: One Hundred Bible Studies on Woman's Place in the Divine Economy* (Oakland, Calif.: Katharine Bushnell, 1923), §624. The emphasis is my own.

33. It is interesting, however, that Brenton's 1851 English translation of the Septuagint renders *gynaika andreian* in Prov 31:10 as "a virtuous woman," adding a footnote: "Lit. 'a woman of strength or power.'" See Sir Lancelot C. L. Brenton, trans., *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English* (1851; repr., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 818.

34. Bushnell, "Lesson 78," §630.

35. Ibid., "Lesson 1: Fundamental," §8.

36. Shulamit Valler, "Who Is *ēšet ḥayil* in Rabbinic Literature?" in *A Feminist Companion to Wisdom Literature* (ed. Athalya Brenner; Feminist Companion to the Bible 9; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 97.

37. Bushnell, "Lesson 78," §629. Note Bushnell's argument that Prov 31 is authored by a woman, more specifically a woman advising her son on the sort of woman to marry.

38. Ibid., §630.

39. The details of this extended discussion are recounted in Greenspoon, "Book 'without Blemish,'" 13–15.

40. Robert Alter, *The Wisdom Books: Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: Norton, 2010), 330–34.

41. The commentary on Prov 31 (which maintains "a woman of virtue") in Elizabeth Cady Stanton's *Woman's Bible* (2 parts; 1895–1898; repr., Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993), part 2, 98, is remarkably traditional: "Solomon's idea of a wise woman, a good mother, a prudent wife, a saving housekeeper and a successful merchant, will be found in the foregoing texts, which every woman who reads should have printed, framed and hung up at her family altar. As Solomon had a thousand women in his household, he had great opportunity for the study of the characteristics of the sex, though one would naturally suppose that wise women, even in his day, preferred a larger sphere of action than within his palace walls. Solomon's opinion of the sex in general is plainly expressed in the foregoing texts. … Solomon is supposed to have written his Song when he was young, Proverbs in middle life, and Ecclesiastes when he was old. He gave admirable rules for wisdom and virtue to all classes, to men, to women and to children, but failed to practise the lessons which he taught."

The Master Copy: Postcolonial Notes on the King James Bible*

R. S. Sugirtharajah

> The King James Bible is a book which has informed and enriched two English-speaking empires over 400 years and carried many of its messages around the globe.
>
> —Melvyn Bragg[1]

> In truth, I do not know what this book is, but I perceive that everything in it is against us.
>
> —W. J. Heaton[2]

> Where is the white man's Book of Heaven?
>
> —Helen Barrett Montgomery[3]

On the Richter scale of English national affection, the King James Version is way at the top, like the late Queen Mother. The lovers of the King James Version often lapse into quasi-spiritual terminology when extolling its virtues and achievements. Listen to the words of William Canton, the passionate historian of the British and Foreign Bible Society: "The blind had a new world opened to them. Hospitals were supplied with small volumes suitable for the sick-wards, and many a little book was afterwards found under the pillow of the dead. In prisons, penitentiaries, workhouses, the Bible wrought wonders."[4] Those of a generation that knew the Bible would have readily recognized this as a reworking of what is now known as the Nazareth Manifesto recorded in Luke's Gospel. The reported words of Jesus have here been resacralized in order to applaud the emancipatory potential of the English Bible. A new and intimate contact with the divine has been established through the real presence of the King James Bible. The Galilean has found his voice again in this English book, and the

sterling liberative program of Luke's Jesus is now seen as the work of the Englishman's book.

Textual Takeover

The King James Version is probably the only Bible in the world that has come to have an ethnic tag attached to it. No version is so closely associated with the people for whom it was translated. The French, the Germans, the Tamils, the Samoans, and countless other ethnic communities have their own versions, but these are not typically perceived as emblems of national identity.[5] The English, on the other hand, who pride themselves on not having a written constitution, embrace, celebrate, and zealously assert the King James Version as their own "national book."[6] In the clarification of this identity, the King James Version has served as the ideal artifact. It has always been described and referred to as "our English Bible" (W. Macneile Dixon), "the national epic" (Huxley), "the English national epic" (Peter Levi), "our Eastern Book," "our own Holy Book" (Monier-Williams), "the greatest of English classics," and "the most venerable of the national heirlooms."[7] W. Macneile Dixon, a professor of English literature, claimed that the English Bible "rooted itself in England as a native tree, like one of her own oaks."[8] This rootedness in English culture, in Dixon's view, makes the King James Version "so national, so representative, so English."[9] That it became the religious icon of a wider English-speaking community led Americans to call it "our American Bible" or "the American Book."[10] Such high praise was not confined only to an earlier generation of commentators. David Daniell rejoices that the "language of KJV is beautiful. Right through the sixty-six books of the Bible"[11] Adam Nicolson calls it the "greatest creation of seventeenth-century England," and its qualities are "those of grace, stateliness, scale and power."[12] Melvyn Bragg, best known perhaps for television programs, has called it "the Word of God in English," and affirms that because of the work of the translators "we speak out of that book still, every day of our lives."[13] While all these accolades have been heaped on the English Bible, it is intriguing to think its original was entirely elsewhere among west Asian and eastern Mediterranean peoples before an English Church and its needs came into existence.

The King James Version is a supreme example of how a text that began life elsewhere might find a new incarnation. The historical events, cultural treasures, religious traditions, and moral laws of the Hebrews and Greeks were transmuted into a definitive aspect of English culture. In the history

of translation, the King James Version is very probably one of the most successful examples of a text finding a new and potent life in a wholly new environment. Sidney Dark audaciously claimed that that it was the genius of the English who "moulded the writings in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, and made them in English even nobler than they were in their original."[14] Such a nationalistic claim was not an isolated case. A. Clutton-Brock stated that the resultant version had been "naturalized in the west" and "what the Jew long ago begot" was "fathered" by Englishmen.[15] For Macneile Dixon, the end product had "the air of an original" about it, so much so that it should be "read like an English book without a hint of style suggestive of a foreign source."[16] The question remains: how did this text that emerged in hot, dusty west Asia come to be seen as the book of "England's green and pleasant land"?

The clue to this takeover could be traced back to the way the translation activity was organized by the panel appointed by King James I. The translators were divided into three groups, and strangely they were not called committees but companies. They were known as the Oxford Company, the Cambridge Company, and the Westminster Company. Each company did not have a secretary, but a director, and each was divided into two subgroups (OT and NT). The habit of calling the committee of revisers a "company" continued when a new revision was mooted for the King James Version. C. J. Cadoux, in his account of the history of the Revised Standard Version, noted that "the members of the committee had already allotted themselves to the Old or the New Testament Company."[17] The word *company* in the Elizabethan and Jacobean England was, to quote Adam Nicolson, a "powerful" one.[18] Besides referring to a group of actors, the "company" also meant trading and investment organizations. These companies emerged at a time when Europe was "discovering" a new world—a world that offered potential commercial opportunities.

A number of companies at that time were trading with different parts of the world. The first company to form was the Muscovy Company in 1555, followed by the Eastland Company for the Baltics in 1579, the Guinea Company for Africa, and finally the East India Company in December 1600. These mercantile companies began as trading ventures, and some of them eventually ended up colonizing and ruling the countries they traded with. Their aim was to bring back goods to England. For our purposes, the employment of the word *company* to describe a panel of translators is both intriguing and revealing. For Nicolson, such an application was a "real innovation," and the working practices of the English Bible

translators had a "hint of efficient, modern commercial organization."[19] Such a picture offers only a partial story of such commercial companies. What Nicolson failed to note is that there is another side to commercial companies, namely, that they are by nature competitive and even predatory. They acquire, enlarge, and take over. Companies not only transact business but they are also in the business of acquiring power and effective control of the product. This was exactly what the Bible translators were unwittingly engaged in. Instead of dealing with goods, they were dealing with texts. While the commercial companies of their time were importing cotton, silk, indigo, and spices, these translators in six companies were transferring the textual ideas of the Jews and ancient Christians and turning them into an English product, which prompted Dixon to say that the end result had "the air of an original" about it, and so much so that it should be "read like an English book without a hint of style suggestive of a foreign source."[20]

The recent portrayals of the King James Version in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can be seen within the colonial rhetoric as a standard colonial appropriation. First, the rhetoric of appropriation works with the notion that the natural resources of the colonized, such as lands, belong rightfully to "civilization" and "mankind" rather than to the indigenous peoples who inhabited those lands.[21] Substitute "texts" for "lands" and you will see an exemplary case of appropriation. Translated to theological hermeneutics, the moral and religious values of another people are there for the benefit of humankind. For Matthew Arnold (1822–1888), the nineteenth-century cultural critic who rebranded the King James Version as a literary text, "all great spiritual disciplines" were for "man's perfection or salvation."[22] Phrased more frankly, the British have every right to benefit from the cultural and religious riches of another people. Arnold found a much-needed balance for English life in the contrastive pair of Hebraism and Hellenism. Hebraism was about rules, duty, and obedience, whereas Hellenism was about knowing, morals, virtues, and beauty. Although there were subtle variations between these two trends of thinking, their "final end and aim" was that "we are all 'partakers of the divine nature.' "[23] The rhetoric of appropriation works by claiming that the basic values of the "other" are identifiable with those of Western civilization and that their "acquiescence to the colonial system" represents "approval of Western ideals."[24] Arnold incorporated both Hellenistic and Hebraic values as those of the English. "Hellenism is of Indo-European growth; and Hebraism is of Semitic growth; and we English, a nation of Indo-European stock, seem

to belong naturally to the movement of Hellenism."[25] He then goes on to claim that in spite of differences, "the genius and history of us English, and our American descendants across the Atlantic," are knitted in some sort of special way "to the genius and history of the Hebrew people."[26]

A second way in which the rhetoric of appropriation works is by seeking identification with the story of the "Other." The story of the Hebrew people was made rhetorically equivalent to the story of the English. The Hebrew Scriptures provided archetypes to work with and language to express the English consciousness of nationality for which no models or language existed before. The Hebrew Scriptures lent themselves to such a nationally inspired interpretation. The Bible was made into an English people's book by seeing the events in the Hebrew Bible as "bound into the national life."[27] Thus Hensley Henson provided historical incidents from English political life to demonstrate how these resonated with and paralleled events on the story of the biblical Hebrews. He sees the revolt of the English monarch against the pope as an act of "the Lord's Anointed," and similarly the rebellion of the Puritans against the monarch as having a precedent in the Hebrew prophets who castigated the misrule of their kings. After an interval, "the time-honoured association of the English Bible with English politics" was renewed in the modern era. Plagued by social and economical issues, Christian socialists found an "effective ally" in the Hebrew prophets, not as foretellers of future events but as social reformers. Henson's contention was that this close association was something unique to the English: "On the continent there was no parallel to this intimacy of the connexion between the Bible and the course of political development."[28]

Third, the rhetoric of appropriation works on the basis of simultaneously denying and discrediting the agency of the "Other" and reifying and exaggerating the role of the master/colonizer. The standard orientalist accusations are reproduced by the admirers of the English Bible. The "Other" is not reliable and not capable of producing anything worthwhile. This is a kind of hermeneutical negation that clears space for the colonizers to rescue the story and script it and make it their own. In this way, the appropriated story is fitted into a manageable and meaningful scheme. The "Other" is not only made redundant, but the new owners become the new curators of the story. Nicolson follows the customary colonial procedure when he claims that "the standard of scholarship among Christ's disciples was despicable."[29] The Gospel writers were discredited for getting their facts wrong: Mark for muddling Isaiah with Malachi, Matthew for misquoting Hebrew and the Septuagint and for attributing the words of

Jeremiah to Zephaniah, and Paul for messing up quotations from Isaiah. Their language, too, was found wanting. The Greek of the New Testament was "coarse and clumsy."[30]

Nicolson even brings in later ecclesiastical authorities to reinforce his allegation. He cites Erasmus, who found New Testament Greek "countrified and simple."[31] He disparages not only the message but also the messenger, quoting the militant skeptic Charles Bradlaugh, who claimed that the Gospels were "concocted … by illiterate, half-starved visionaries in some dark corner of a Graeco-Syrian slum."[32]

After diminishing the ancient scribes and their scripts as unworthy and unreliable, Nicolson resorts to the other colonial habit of monumentalizing the role of the master. This is achieved by emphasizing the erudition and excellence of King James's translators. In contrast to the biblical writers, the royal translators are seen as men of eminent scholarship. For instance, John Reynolds, the prime mover behind the translation project, was praised for his memory and reading, which were "near to a miracle." Miles Smith had Hebrew at his fingertips, and Richard Brett was "skilled and versed to a criticism in the Latin, Greek, Chaldee, Arabic and Ethiopian tongues."[33] Nicolson then assures us of the authenticity of their work. These king's translators were "clever, canny, resourceful and energetic"; but most importantly, unlike the original compilers, they did not "not distort the source of [their] authority."[34]

Finally, their importance is strengthened by according them a quasi-mystical status. The original writers of the Bible were alleged to be known as God's secretaries. Nicolson makes the royal translators their heirs: "Secretaryship is one is of the greatest shaping forces behind the King James Bible."[35] These royal secretaries are "loyal" and "utterly disposed to the uses of the divine will." They were in fact rendering a service that sought to be utterly submissive to King James and faithful to the text. They thought of themselves as instruments of God. As secretaries, they had no authority of their own, but were entirely dependent on the master. The implicit message was that the Hampton Court translators could not get it wrong because they were not the authors, but were simply executing God's will.

Cloning Texts, Colonializing Minds

In the colonies, the King James Bible acted as a cultural powerhouse that determined the values and accuracy of various vernacular versions. Its hold was such that it led to the production of versions analogous to the

English Bible. The vernacular Bibles were made to look like clones of the King James Version. The British and Foreign Bible Society, which circulated only the King James Version, made it a policy to bring out translations in Indian vernaculars that would do what the "Authorized Version had done in English" so that the translated book would become the "prized heritage of the Indian Church."[36] The Jaffna Auxiliary Bible Society's record shows how the parent society in Madras virtually bullied the translators in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) to comply with the benchmark represented by the Authorized Version. The resolution of March 5, 1841, of the Madras Auxiliary Bible Society states that there should be a "fixed standard of translation" and "that such a standard is possessed in the authorized English version."[37] The resolution went on to propose that because the translators lacked tools, had no access to books, and had not kept abreast of the latest critical ideas, they should "adhere to the sense adopted in the English version" rather than "justify an appeal to the Textus Receptus, of the Hebrew and Greek originals."[38] Such a restrictive process required that all vernacular versions should adopt the "position of words, arrangements of sentences and punctuation" of the English Authorized Version,[39] and this was applied to the translation projects in the rest of India as well. The idea was to "secure one version of scripture in each language." The British and Foreign Bible Society firmly believed that it was "specially qualified to harmonize the differences," and saw the production of such authorized versions as a "sacred task."[40] The result was that each Indian vernacular had its own authorized version known as the Union Version. These Union Versions were ecumenical enterprises, a progressive act at that time.

Nevertheless, the production of the Union Version had two troubling consequences. First, it replaced all existing translation efforts. For instance, there were already in existence in Tamil a number of translations done by the Danish missionaries Bartholomew Ziegenbalg (1682–1719), Johann Fabricius (1710–1791), and Charles Rhenius (1790–1838). The Union Version brought out by the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1868 under the chief reviser Henry Bower (1830–1889) displaced these earlier attempts. Second, these nineteenth-century Union Versions in the course of time attained the status of an original and came to be regarded as the final revealed truth. Almost all the Indian vernaculars had their own Union or Standard Version. Any deviation from them or any attempt at new translations were seen as desecrating the oracle of God. The King James Version became the ideal benchmark, so that even the spirituals of the slaves, which contained a preponderance of biblical verses, were

treated as or assumed to be their King James Bible.[41] The King James Version was responsible for creating and perpetuating a standard of singular, absolutist, and irrecoverably fixed textual authority and reference.

Thus the King James Version had created a colonial mind-set where an extremely literal reading of the written Word of God had replaced the more flexible indigenous ways of articulating sacred stories through songs, chants, rituals, folktales, and visual forms. The British and the Foreign Bible Society's annual reports routinely make clear the importance of the written word: "To the spoken must be added the written word. The missionary who takes the gospel to Africa, India or China soon discovers that he cannot make progress beyond a certain point without putting that gospel in a written form into the hands of the people."[42] Instead of cohabiting with nonwritten indigenous forms, the King James Version introduced a fixed textual form as the ultimate authority. The textualized written word was now seen as God's word, the word of God. This also paved the way to thinking that no religious truth was valid unless it appeared in a textual and printed form. Religious truths represented in nonverbal and nonwritten formats came to be viewed as inferior.

The continuation of this colonial legacy of privileging literal reading came up recently when the question of homosexuality and same-sex marriage erupted in the Anglican communion. Ironically, when Archbishop Akinola of Nigeria accused the Western churches of being colonialist and thrusting their version of Christianity on Africa, he was simply parroting the colonial teaching of the literal reading of the written word.

The introduction of Christianity as a book religion by missionaries in the colonies and especially in India had its repercussions. Hindus and Buddhists, who were more accustomed to and comfortable with both oral and written forms, were now faced with a situation where their sacred stories were bound in fixed written volumes and classified as their "Bibles." Max Müller called his fifty-volume Sacred Books of the East "forgotten Bibles," and his rival and fellow comparativist Monier Monier-Williams termed them the "Bibles of non-Christian systems."[43] These "forgotten Bibles" gained an authority and status like that of a canonical text. Indians who were raised on the pluralistic and different variant versions of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata were presented with "authorized" and expurgated versions of these stories. Other forms of religious expression were subordinated to these written texts. More worryingly, from now on their interpretation was no more in the hands of a Hindu council or a Buddhist sangha. Once these religions had been made into

book religions, they were subjected to a modernistic scrutiny. This meant subjecting the texts to the severest philological and historical investigation, searching for the original and authentic words and discarding later accretions as not integral to the tradition. As Müller could claim, any interpreter "can take any word, a hundred, or a thousand words," of these forgotten Bibles and "analyze them, or take them to pieces."[44] Now the temptation was to take these "forgotten Bibles" for the religion of Hindus and Buddhists. The total reliance on a text as the supreme authority in the colonies had its roots in presenting the King James Version as the book of the Christians.

Colonial Reception: Materiality and Mimicry

The reception history of the King James Version in the colonies is a complicated one. To the disappointment of the early missionaries, the "natives" did not always receive the book with the reverence it deserved. Hailed as the "word of God in English" and as a "national shrine built only of words,"[45] it was at times treated with disdain and disrespect. For the "natives," the Englishman's Word of God was both a textual and a material object of practical serviceability. They not only found in its pages spiritual sustenance but also used the pages for nonspiritual purposes. The British and Foreign Bible Society's annual reports routinely documented not only how the Bible brought notable transformation in the lives of the colonized but also how the pages of the book was put to use physically. They became wrapping paper for various items, including cigars, medicine, sweetmeats, and cartridges. William Colenso (1811–1899), the brother of the famous John Colenso, who worked as a printer in New Zealand, recalled how he came across a cartridge rolled up in a piece of printed paper. To his astonishment, it was a leaf of an English Bible that had the chilling words of Barzillai the Gileadite, recorded in 2 Sam 19:34: "how long have I to live?"[46] The medicine that was sent to the English children who were trapped during the Indian Revolt of 1857 was wrapped in a paper that had the words of Isa 51:12–14, "I, even I, am he that comforteth you. … The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail."

Another use to which the "natives" often put the Englishman's book was as a totem that had the power to protect and ward off danger. The missionary's book was hawked by Maoris as a charm to keep them safe from bullets and as an aid in dispatching enemies.[47] When a canoe of a

group of Tahitians overturned, they were not afraid of the sharks because secured to their mast were Bibles carefully wrapped in cloth. A Maori fighting party was reluctant to attack a village because it had a printed Bible. People bought John's Gospel saying that it was the best prayer to expel mice, rats, and moles. As Homi Bhabha has put it, in such usages the "founding object" of the Western world became "eccentric" and lost its "representational authority."[48]

The Bible that was marketed by the British and Foreign Bible Society as "the Bible without notes" ended up in one instance having lots of notes and explanatory comments. One of the stipulations of King James had been that the new translation should not contain any polemical notes in the margins. It was felt that the Geneva Bible, which was popular at that time, was too dangerous, with annotations that questioned, among other things, the divine right of kings. To the horror of missionaries, during the Taiping revolution (1850–1864), the Chinese version of the King James Bible ended up with numerous notes and annotations. Hong Xiuquan, who played the leading role in the uprising, wrote a number of comments and made many revisions. Among these were his annotations on the Ten Commandments, and, ironically, his proclamation of himself as the divine son—the elder brother of Jesus, to lead the revolt against both the Manchu rulers and the foreign invaders. Hong's notes on the parable of the Tares reflects this divine commission: "The Father and the Great Elder Brother descend upon earth to slay the vicious and save the righteous, to gather the wheat and burn the tares. This has come true."[49]

The "noblest monument of English prose" was not always received with awe and wonder. It was mimicked, tampered with, altered, and redrafted. One of those unfazed by the majesty of the text was J. C. Kumarappa, a rare Indian Christian, who openly joined Gandhi's freedom movement and became his economic adviser. During the independence struggle, Kumarappa was imprisoned, and the colonial authorities left him with only the King James Version to read. What he did with the Englishman's book was to mimic its textuality in order to mock and undermine both the colonial administration and their Christianity. He did this in a number of ways. He filled in the gaps and added a phrase or a word in the original to make the text more relevant to the multi-faith reality of India. For instance, he added "neither Hindu, nor Muslim, neither Zoroastrian, nor Christians" to the famous Pauline passage (Gal 3:28) that there was neither Greek nor Jew[50]—an addition that would have been beyond the imagination of the Hampton Court translators or

most missionaries, who were all brought up on different varieties of the single faith, Christianity.

Kumarappa also respectfully mimicked some of the celebrated passages of the King James Version in order to reflect what was going on politically at that time in India, and on other occasions he redrafted biblical verses in order to undermine and expose the brutality of the British. When the Indian freedom fighters were beaten up by the colonial police, Kumarappa rephrased the familiar words of Jesus in Matt 25 that summed up poignantly what discipleship was about: "I was beaten with laths and ye came not to dress my wounds, I fell down unconscious and ye gave me no water to refresh me, I was stripped naked and was indecently handled but ye raised not your voice in protest, I was dipped into saline mud and ye came not to lift me out, I was thrown amongst the thorns and you came not to rescue me."[51] The privations listed in the Matthean passage were now replaced by the sufferings of the Indian freedom fighters. The subtext was palpably clear. Kumarappa was reminding the colonial authorities that it was Jesus, in the form of the Satyagrahis, whom they were abusing. When imprisoned protesters died from fasting, he reformulated the immortal words of Paul, "Persecution has lost its sting and jail its victory. Suffering is the Satyagrahi's goal." Similarly, Jesus' weeping over Jerusalem was parodied to indicate what the European nations were doing in the colonies: "O Europe, O Europe, ye that suppress meek and mild nations and live on their lifeblood, ye that controvert and distort My teachings and thereby exploit the ignorant, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your countries are left unto you desolate."[52] Nicolson's proud and pompous claim for the English of the King James Version that it was not the "language of mothers, or man at the market stall,"[53] or "the English you would have heard on the street,"[54] was transformed into the speech of the colonial subaltern. Kumarappa brought the anguish and pain of the street into the text.

Kumarappa played with the text not only for political purposes but also to ridicule the type of Jesus imparted by colonial Christianity. Thus the answer of Jesus to the disciples of John the Baptist asking who he was became: "Look at my Western clothes, look at my cropped head, look at my Western manners; my table is laden with beef and pork, and my house is decorated with things gathered from the four corners of the earth. I go to church on Sundays and have a pew in front; our names are drawn from the saints in the Bible; I wear a cross round my neck or on the watch chain,

and read the Bible morning, evening and night, and pray to God that the hungry may be fed." To such a declaration, Jesus' answer is obvious: "I know ye not; not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven but He that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."[55] Such ridicule was Kumarappa's way of telling the missionaries of the irrelevance of their version of the faith.

Kumarappa often added quotation marks to these "rebiblicized" verses in order to give the impression that they were part of the King James Version, and thus make them appear integral to the hallowed text. Using the style and substance of the text that had become the standard bearer of the empire and Christianity, Kumarappa subverted it. He negotiated "its own authority through a process of interactive 'unpicking' and incommensurable, insurgent relinking."[56] He was engaged in the Bhabhian subaltern mimicry, subversion, and menace. The most revered book—the King James Version—now found itself "almost the same, but not quite."[57]

Recent Books on the Book and Their Hermeneutical Blind Spot

The last two decades have seen a spurt of publishing of books on the English Bible.[58] It is no coincidence that there has also been—at a time when the U.S. administration was projecting itself as the new imperium—a crop of books on empire, lending new credence to the old adage that the Bible and empire go hand in hand. The subject matter of these books and those on the English Bible often overlap. The latter tell how the translation project was caught up in internecine ecclesiastical battles and of the power of the monarchy and nobility. These erudite volumes are notable in sharing two features. One is their passionate defense of the translation brilliance of the King James Version and their relentless attack on any new versions. The other is their hermeneutical blind spot regarding the role the King James Version has played in modern colonialism.

Almost all of these books on the English Bible devote a great deal of space to evaluating the King James Version in relation to versions that appeared before or since the 1611 Bible. The consensus is that by comparison recent translations are acts of willful cultural vandalism. These modern translations are in the "language of the memo,"[59] their style "mundane, tensionless and mystery-free."[60] In contrast, "the seventeenth-century phrases seem richer, deeper, truer, more alive, more capable of carrying complex and multiple meanings than anything the twentieth century could manage."[61] Even Daniell, who prefers the Geneva Bible to the King

James Version, concedes that the book by the Hampton Court translators will outlast the new upstarts. In order to discredit the modern versions, these writers call in cultural conservatives like T. S. Eliot and Philip Larkin to lambast them. Their preference for the King James Version over the new arrivals is often based on the simple and purely subjective reason that the King James Version is venerably archaic and enticingly more familiar. As Nicolson puts it, "the old, for the English, is holy and beautiful."[62] It is part of the English consciousness to "hunger for the archaic" and "search for the ancient and the primitive," a "deeply retrospective habit of mind which searches for meaning in the past."[63] These commentators work on the assumption that only seventeenth-century English is capable of bringing out the complex and multiple meanings of the original Hebrew and Greek texts. It is not clear why the Bible could be transmitted only through the English of the Jacobeans except that it was the "language of patriarchy," "of an instructed order," and "of authority."[64]

The attitude to colonialism in these books on the English Bibles is intriguing. When they mention colonialism, it is mainly the American colony to which they refer. America is given importance because, as Alister McGrath claims, it represented "far the most important English-language community of faith outside the British Isles."[65] When other colonies are referred to, it is always in the context of Bible translation. McGrath mentions that "whenever English language versions of Christianity sprang up" they were "nourished" by the "definitive" translation of the King James Version.[66] Hamel and Daniell draw attention to the translation activities that went on in the colonies. They record only minimal historical details, reinforcing the idea of a missionary as a heroic translator. Like the colonial explorers taming the land, missionary translators are portrayed as single-handedly mastering the obscure and difficult languages of the natives. Daniell refers to the work of John Eliot (North America), Robert Morrison (China), and William Carey (India) without any reference to the local pundits and munshis who played an essential and well-recorded role. They furnish astonishing figures to demonstrate how the Word of God was translated into many of the world's vernaculars. They maintain a deadly silence as to how these vernacular versions simultaneously enriched and enfeebled the local languages.

What these books on the English Bible fail to acknowledge and explain is how the empire played a critical role in reviving the fortunes of the King James Version. The final triumph of this version over its rivals was not achieved by its own "unassisted" merits, as Hensley Henson, the bishop

of Durham, claimed.[67] It owed this success to the empire. It is now fairly well known that it was the commercial politics and patriotic sentiments of the time rather than the literary merit of the King James Version that led to its ultimate ascendancy. Charles I and his archbishop, who detested the Geneva Bible, argued that the imported cheap and good quality Geneva Bibles were putting the English printers out of business.[68] Another reason was, as Naomi Tadmor has shown, the "Anglicisation in the wording of the Hebrew Bible" made the contents, meanings, and its politics "more familiar and near."[69] Less well known, or at least acknowledged, is that the emergence of Britain as an imperial power facilitated its eventual popularity. The eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British military and economic expansion was "preceded and accompanied by missionary work based on the King James Bible."[70]

It was during this time that Britain discovered its role as a nation with a mission. The colonial literature of the time was full of the new destiny of Britain, which was seen as the new Cyrus liberating benighted peoples. Chosen as God's instrument to preach the gospel to the heathen, the British saw themselves as trustees of these colonies. The King James Version contributed to this new nationalistic mood. As Liah Greenfield has shown, it carried an unusually high use of the word *nation*. It appears 454 times in the King James Version in contrast to 100 occurrences of *natio* in the Vulgate. The Hebrew terms *'ummâ*, *gôy*, *lĕ'ōm,* and *'am* are all translated as "nation" in the King James Version, whereas in the Vulgate they are rendered as *populus*. The Greek terms *ethnos* and *genos* are sometimes translated as *natio* in the Vulgate, but very often other terms such as *populus*, *genus,* and *gens* are employed.[71] The English translation of "nation" had multiple meanings, and it was "used to designate a tribe connected by ties of kinship and language, and race."[72] The Bible was susceptible to a "nationally inspired interpretation" that facilitated the British to perform their new role as the chosen nation. Two centuries later, in a different political and ecclesiastical context, the popular sixteenth-century Geneva Bible with its basic ingredients of individualism, martyrdom, and future life was found to be redundant. The Geneva Bible was seen as seditious and as a dissenters' Bible, whereas the "whole purpose" of the King James Version "had been nation-building."[73] An "embattled religious minority" with its Geneva Bible had now given way to a confident nation on the verge of building the largest empire the world had known. The King James Version with its accent on nation, national election, and establishment values seemed to be the right text for the imperial occasion. A translation

that stemmed from its "loyal belief in that divine-cum-regal authority"[74] now assumed its preordained role as the book of the empire.

These recent books on the English Bible hardly touch on the twentieth century. Of nearly nine hundred pages of Daniell's erudite book, only thirty are devoted to it. Even here the focus is on how the Bible impacted the Victorians, Daniell providing a scholarly survey of the Bible's impact on Victorian culture. He narrates the near universal knowledge of the King James Version, its influence on scientists like Charles Darwin, the heroic efforts of Matthew Arnold to treat it as literature, and Romantic poets like William Blake who saw in the Bible a "visionary illumination." But what goes unmentioned is how the imperialist enterprise permeated and sustained that culture. The real and most robust textual challenge to the Bible in the Victorian era was posed, not by Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species,* as these books claim, or by the higher criticism, but by the "discovery" and publication of the fifty volumes of the Sacred Books of the East. These sacred texts challenged the preeminence of the Christian story. Since then, to use words that Benjamin Jowett employed in a different context, "the book in which we believe all religious truth to be contained" has become "the most uncertain of all books." Such a destabilization occurred not because the Bible was "interpreted by arbitrary and uncertain methods," as Jowett claimed,[75] but because of the presence of the sacred scriptures from the East that embodied in them moral values that were once thought of as exclusive to the Christian Bible.[76]

The above survey does not refer to the current flourishing of books on the King James Version to mark the 400th anniversary.[77] This has to wait for a later date, but three immediate comments come to mind. First, these books are a mixed bag ranging from uncritically extolling the virtues of the King James Bible to making a fair assessment of its influence. To the former belongs Bragg's *Book of Books,* which sees the King James Version as the driving force behind all the achievements of the English-speaking peoples. On the other hand, David Crystal's *Begat: The King James Bible and the English Language* demonstrates how difficult it is to evaluate the influence of the King James Version. His study has shown that only 257 stock biblical phrases found in current English usage, contrary to popular misperception, are original to the King James Version, many more going back to Tyndale and earlier versions. Second, these books, like earlier ones, continue to highlight the enriching impact of the King James Bible in England or America and overlook the complicated political and cultural history of the book in the colonies. The exception here is Bragg,

but he paints a very rosy picture, the slave trade being a slight taint. Third, all the authors of recent books are white, male, and middle class. This is the class that used to run the empire. Now that the empire has evaporated, are they trying to recover their soul though a translated text?

Finally, Moving from the Master to the Masses

What of the future? Will the King James Version last the next 400 years? It all depends on what the custodians of the book want it to be. The King James Version as a unifying narrative providing a common interpretive reference for English-speaking people is no longer tenable at a time when the believer is replaced by the consumer/customer, and there is a "customer-generated" Bible to suit every interest.

When a religion is in trouble, the reformers generally go to the founding text for clues to its revival, but now the aged book is itself in trouble. The greatness of a text is its ability to reinvent itself. In the nineteenth century, when scientific theories of the time and the newly emerging higher criticism undermined the authority of the Bible, the King James Version was able to reincarnate itself as a literary text in a single Victorian cultural context. Now, in a changed—multicultural, postliterary, and postcolonial—milieu, the Englishman's Bible has to come up with a different story. The King James Version has long been associated with the ruling establishment. It was seen as monarchist and episcopal. "One of the consistent driving forces" of the King James Version "is the idea of majesty," claimed Nicolson.[78] The British and Foreign Bible Society's popular reports used to capitalize on the emperor as a "devout reader of the Bible." George V's promise to Queen Alexandra to read a chapter a day was seen as a "high standard" to be followed in the colonies.[79] Now, in the postcolonial context, the book is marketed as the book the celebrities read. Recent marketization of the King James Bible in single books by the Canongate Press illustrates this. The survival of the King James Version depends on its giving up its elitist, majestic, ceremonial, stately, celebratory, and establishment image, and recovering the countermessage that is enshrined in the narrative —the message that worried ordinary people care about, justice, compassion, tolerance, rightness, responsibility, goodness. In this way the King James Version can shed its stateliness and majesty and align itself with other sacred texts of the world that also strive for these human and universal qualities. The Bible is permeated by counternarratives and variants that resonate with the tragedies and triumphs of ordinary people. The

King James Version should relinquish its association with the master class and move with the masses. To slightly alter the words of Jorge Luis Borges, a book that does not contain its counterbook is not worth preserving.

Notes

* An earlier version of this essay appeared in Hannibal Hamlin and Norman W. Jones, eds., *The King James Bible after Four Hundred Years: Literary, Linguistic, and Cultural Influences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 146–63. Reprinted with the permission of Cambridge University Press.

1. Melvyn Bragg, *The Book of Books: The Radical Impact of the King James Version* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2006), 344.

2. W. J. Heaton, *The Bible of the Reformation* (London: Francis Griffiths, 1913), 4.

3. Helen Barrett Montgomery, *The Bible and Missions* (West Medford: Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions, 1920), 133.

4. William Canton, *The Bible and the Anglo-Saxon People* (London: Dent, 1914), 219.

5. While some might argue that the Luther Bible had a substantial impact on German national identity, the KJV is often seen as having the unique status of not having been translated by a single individual but rather being the product of a slow and careful process of the work of many translators over a period of time, like the English laws and constitution, and in this being distinctively English. See my *Bible and Empire: Postcolonial Explorations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 205), 226–27. See also Krishna Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 103–4.

6. Adam Nicolson, *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003), 236.

7. H. W Hoare, *The Evolution of the English Bible: Historical Sketch of the Successive Versions* (London: John Murray, 1901), 3.

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9. Ibid., 49.

10. David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 768.

11. Ibid., 429.

12. Nicolson, *God's Secretaries*, 70, 189.

13. Bragg, *Book of Books,* 8.

14. Sidney Dark, "Christianity and Culture," *New Green Quarterly* 2 (1936): 86.

15. A. Clutton-Brock, "The English Bible," in Storr, *English Bible: Essays*, 78.

16. Dixon, "English Bible," 54.

17. C. J. Cadoux, "The Revised Version and After," in *The Bible in Its Ancient and English Versions* (ed. Wheeler Robinson; Oxford: Clarendon, 1940), 242–43.

18. Nicolson, *God's Secretaries*, 70.

19. Ibid., 71.

20. Dixon, "English Bible," 54. While this claim is contested by scholars who note the ways in which the KJV hebraized the English language, it nonetheless reflects a widespread popular attitude about the Englishness of the KJV.

21. David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1993), 28.

22. Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism* (London: Smith, Elder, 1889), 90.

23. Ibid.

24. Spurr, *Rhetoric of Empire*, 33.

25. Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy,* 101.

26. Ibid., 101–2.

27. Herbert Hensley Henson, "Introductory Essay," in Storr, *English Bible: Essays*, 9.

28. Ibid.

29. Nicolson, *God's Secretaries*, 82.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Cadoux, "Revised Version and After," 198.

34. Nicolson, *God's Secretaries,* 184.

35. Ibid.

36. J. S. M. Hooper, *The Bible in India with a Chapter on Ceylon* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), 11.

37. *A Brief Narrative of the Operations of the Jaffna Auxiliary Bible Society in the Preparation of a Version of the Tamil Scriptures* (Jaffna: Strong and Asbury, 1868), 16.

38. Ibid., 17.

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41. Daniell, *Bible in English*, 707.

42. *Tell the World* (London: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1933), 56–57.

43. Monier Monier-Williams, *The Holy Bible and the Sacred Books of the East* (London: Seeley, 1887), 30.

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51. Idem, "A Day of Prayer," *Young India,* June 19, 1930, 261.

52. Idem, *Practice and Precepts of Jesus* (Ahmedabad: Navjivan, 1945), 37.

53. Nicolson, *God's Secretaries*, 195.

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55. Kumarappa, *Christianity, Its Economy,* 65–66.

56. Bhabha, *Location of Culture,* 185.

57. Ibid., 86.

58. Benson Bobrick, *Wide as the Waters: The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001); Alister McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 2001); Christopher De Hamel, *The Book: A History of the Bible* (London: Phaidon, 2001); Nicolson, *God's Secretaries*.

59. Nicolson, *God's Secretaries,* 234.

60. Ibid., 236.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid., 237.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid., 154.

65. McGrath, *In the Beginning,* 290.

66. Ibid.

67. Henson, "Introductory Essay," 5.

68. See Mike Spencer, *Freedom and Order: History, Politics and the English Bible* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2011), 112. See also my *Postcolonial Reconfigurations: An Alternative Way of Reading the Bible and Doing theology* (St. Louis.: Chalice, 2003), esp. 61–62. The domestic printing of the Geneva Bible ceased in 1616.

69. Naomi Tadmor, *The Social Universe of the English Bible: Scripture, Society, and Culture in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 164.

70. McGrath, *In the Beginning*, 290.

71. Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 53.

72. Ibid., 52.

73. Nicolson, *God's Secretaries*, 230.

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77. See, e.g., David Norton, *The King James Bible : A Short History from Tyndale to Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); David Crystal, *Begat: The King James Version and the English Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Tadmor, *Social Universe*; Bragg, *Book of Books*; Gordon Campbell, *Bible: The Story of the King James Version 1611–2011* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Hannibal Hamlin and Norman W. Jones, eds., *The King James Bible after 400 Years: Literary, Linguistic, and Cultural Influences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010);

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Contributors

Robert Alter. Class of 1937 Professor of Hebrew and Comparative Literature in the Department of Near Eastern Studies; University of California-Berkeley; Berkeley, California.

C. Clifton Black. Otto A. Piper Professor of Biblical Theology; Princeton Theological Seminary; Princeton, New Jersey.

David G. Burke. Dean Emeritus; Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship at the American Bible Society; New York, New York.

Richard A. Burridge. Dean of King's College London and Professor of Biblical Interpretation at King's College; London, England.

David J. A. Clines. Emeritus Professor of Biblical Studies; University of Sheffield; Sheffield, England.

Simon Crisp. Director of United Bible Societies Translations Services; United Bible Societies; Reading, England.

David J. Davis. Assistant Professor of History and Western Civilization; Houston Baptist University; Houston, Texas.

James D. G. Dunn. Lightfoot Professor of Divinity, Emeritus, in the Department of Theology; University of Durham, England.

Lori Anne Ferrell. Professor of Early Modern History and Literature in the School of Arts and Humanities; Claremont Graduate University; Claremont, California.

Leonard J. Greenspoon. Philip M. and Ethel Klutznik Professor in Jewish Civilization and Professor in Classical and Near Eastern Studies and Theology; Creighton University; Omaha, Nebraska.

Robin Griffith-Jones. Master of the Temple; The Temple Church; London, England.

Malcolm Guite. Lecturer in English Literature and Chaplain in Girton College; Cambridge University, England.

Andrew E. Hill. Professor of Old Testament Studies; Wheaton College; Wheaton, Illinois.

John F. Kutsko. Executive Director; Society of Biblical Literature; Atlanta, Georgia.

Seth Lerer. Dean of Arts and Humanities and Distinguished Professor of Literature; University of California-San Diego; La Jolla, California.

Barbara K. Lewalski. William R. Kenan Professor of English and of History and Literature, Emeritus; Harvard University; Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Jacobus A. Naudé. Professor of Old Testament Studies in the Department of Classical and Near Eastern Studies; University of the Free State; Bloemfontein, South Africa.

David Norton. Professor of English in the School of English, Film, Theatre, and Media Studies; Victoria University of Wellington; Wellington, New Zealand.

Jon Pahl. Peter Paul and Elizabeth Hagan Professor in the History of Christianity; Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Kuo-Wei Peng. Translations Specialist; Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship at the American Bible Society; New York, New York.

Deborah W. Rooke. Lecturer in the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies and Faculty Research Fellow in the Oxford Centre for Christianity and Culture; Oxford University; Oxford, England.

Rodney Sadler Jr. Associate Professor of Bible; Union Theological Seminary and the Presbyterian School of Christian Education; Charlotte, Virginia.

Katharine Doob Sakenfeld. Eisenberger Professor of Old Testament, Emeritus; Princeton Theological Seminary; Princeton, New Jersey.

Harold P. Scanlin. United Bible Societies Emeritus Research Director for Biblical Texts and Translations; Allentown; Pennsylvania.

Naomi Seidman. Graduate Theological Union Koret Professor of Jewish Culture and Director of the Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies; Graduate Theological Union; Berkeley, California.

Christopher Southgate. Research Fellow in Theology; University of Exeter; Exeter, England. His most recent collection of poetry is *A Gash in the Darkness*.

R. S. Sugirtharajah. Emeritus Professor of Biblical Hermeneutics in the Department of Theology and Religion; University of Birmingham; Birmingham, England.

Joan Taylor. Professor of Christian Origins and Second Temple Judaism in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies; King's College London; London, England.

Graham Tomlin. Dean of St. Mellitus College and Professor in Historical Theology; St. Mellitus College; London, England.

Philip H. Towner. Dean of the Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship at the American Bible Society; New York, New York.

David Trobisch. Formerly the Throckmorton-Hayes Professor of New Testament Languages and Literature at Bangor Theological Seminary;

Bangor, Maine. Consultant for the Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship at the American Bible Society; New York, New York.

N. T. Wright. Formerly the Church of England Bishop of Durham. Currently Research Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity in the School of Divinity at St. Mary's College; St. Andrews University; Fife, Scotland.

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"The KJV became a dynamic cultural presence—a genius within English-speaking cultures—because it was a fine translation that approximated the originals exceptionally well; and it became great literature as a secondary matter because of our ancestors' intense familiarity with it. It has a literary life only because it is—or was—the book of religion." —David Norton

In this collection of essays, thirty scholars from diverse disciplines offer their unique perspectives on the genius of the King James Version, a translation whose 400th anniversary was recently celebrated throughout the English-speaking world. While avoiding nostalgia and hagiography, each author clearly appreciates the monumental, formative role the KJV has had on religious and civil life on both sides of the Atlantic (and beyond) as well as on the English language itself.

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David G. Burke served as Director of the Translations Department and as the first dean of the Eugene A. Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship at the American Bible Society. He is the author of *The Poetry of Baruch* and editor of *Translation That Openeth the Window: Reflections on the History and Legacy of the King James Bible* (both from Society of Biblical Literature). ***John F. Kutsko*** is Executive Director of the Society of Biblical Literature and the author of *Between Heaven and Earth: Divine Presence and Absence in the Book of Ezekiel* (Eisenbrauns). ***Philip H. Towner*** is Dean of the Eugene A. Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship at ABS and holds several visiting lecture positions in Europe. He is the author of *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Eerdmans) and *1–2 Timothy and Titus* (IVP Academic).

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